AN APPROACH TO THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

RUSSELL OLT

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By

RUSSELL OLT

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To Those Students
Whose Searching Questions
and Stimulating Discussions
Have Made This Book Possible

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FOREWORD

I have no desire to write a scholarly work. Indeed, I have had no desire to write a book at all on the subject of the psychology of religion. Each year, however, for the twenty-five years I have taught the subject, I have felt no book had yet been written which presented the field suitably, adequately, and pointedly to the student who would learn more about the application of psychology to religion. The book lays no claim to originality or profundity. It is simply a concise treatment of the subjects which merit consideration in this field. My attempt has been to do violence neither to psychology nor religion.

The many books on the subject have had points of strength, but from my viewpoint, weaknesses as well. Only because no completely suitable basic presentation had I found, did I attempt to put in writing the organization and subject matter I have felt my students have found useful through the years. The materials selected here do cause the student to come to grips with religion, the ways in which psychology enters into its phenomena. I subscribe to the theory that explaining is not explaining away. I recognize at the outset that not all religious phenomena can be psychologically explained. If one postulates an omnipotent theistic God, one must be prepared to admit that God can and may sometimes do things which elude man's understanding. He may even do things which, within the compass of man's knowledge, are neither understandable nor explainable. Man must also admit that if God ordained the laws of the universe, there is the

corollary that He would have the power to suspend the operation of the natural laws which govern that universe, although such occasions one would expect to be extremely rare.

I would approach religious phenomena with a reverent spirit and, at the same time, be brutally frank in exposing what I believe to be errors or misjudgments of religious phenomena. The general treatment is both brief and concise, but the subjects discussed open up the horizon for further study and investigation. The field is great, for religious tangents permeate all areas of living.

— *Russell Olt*

Anderson, Indiana
September 1, 1955

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An Approach To

The Psychology of Religion

CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF THE SUBJECT

Psychology of Religion, as the name indicates, represents an attempt to apply psychology to religion. The effort to apply psychology at all is relatively of recent origin. Indeed the science of psychology itself does not date back far. That is not to say that elements of what we now term psychology were not found among ancient peoples. They were. Heraclitus (cir. 505 B.C.) had germs of psychology in his writings when he discussed illusions, permanence, the doctrine of opposites. The old psychological concept of apperception was likewise reflected in his writings. Empedocles (cir. 455 B.C.) introduced two theories of perception: first, that like perceives like, and the other, that perception is effective through effluences, i.e., images thrown off an object. Anaxagoras (cir. 460 B.C.) had a theory of perception just opposite that of Empedocles, viz., that opposite is perceived by opposite. Anaxagoras first introduced *nous,* mind which he conceived as being present in the creation of the universe. For him mind sets things in motion. The Atomists (cir. 440–420 B.C.) believed that sense perception was produced by the rough atom; reason by the fine round one. The Atomists might be considered as giving inspiration to a materialistic psychology. The soul for them was composed of small infinite atoms.

For centuries what we know today as psychology was a branch of philosophy and was called mental philosophy. Only when it developed its own techniques and separate subject matter did it divorce itself from its parent. It earned its right to be called a science only as recently as 1879, when Wilhelm Wundt established the first psychological laboratory at Leipzig. G. Stanley Hall followed soon after in this country by opening the first American laboratory of psychology at Johns Hopkins University in 1883.

Psychologists were both slow and late in applying psychology at all. Among the earliest attempts at application were those of Josiah Royce, who called his early work *Outlines of Psychology with Some Practical Applications.* William James, the greatest of the early American psychologists, delivered a memorable set of lectures later put in book form and still referred to under the title of *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and to Students on Life's Ideals.* A little later Hugo Münsterberg broadened the application of psychology in his book *Psychology and Industrial Efficiency.*

Today there is no limit to the applications that have been made of psychology. The terms abnormal, educational, child, adolescent, social, animal, business, art, medicine, nursing represent just a few of the outreaches of the science. Indeed, so popular has the application become that the layman has imbibed some of its numerous applications. Health, happiness, and success, the great American trilogy of what men seek most, have been exploited to the full by *pseudo*-psychology.

These quacks hold that psychology is the key to living, the touchstone for realizing man's unconscious aspirations. Such questions are asked as, "Are you the man or

woman you ought to be, want to be?" "Are you unhappy?" "Do you lack charm?" "Would you like to double your income in one year?" "Would you like the key to recovering your health?" Well, the *pseudo*-psychologists pretend that psychology rightly applied brings the answer to every human need, and thousands of people have been tricked by delusions thus presented.

Let us return from this by-path to the history of the application of psychology to religion. Among the earliest psychologists to make such application was William James of Harvard in his *Varieties of Religious Experience.* This book has a wealth of illustrations of religious experiences. His interpretation, although not always considered a valid one today, is at least stimulating and enlightening to the student of psychology. Morris Jastrow of the University of Pennsylvania in *The Study of Religion* made a study of the historical origins and nature of religion together with their relation to other areas of thinking. Edwin Diller Starbuck of the State University of Iowa in *The Psychology of Religion* reflects pioneer investigation in the field of application to religion. His inductive study of conversion is still referred to by scholars in this field.

Contemporary in this early period (just at the turn of the century) was George Coe of the Union Theological Seminary, New York. Two books of his were fine contributions to the field, *The Spiritual Life* and *Religion of a Mature Mind.* A particularly scholarly contribution was made by Edward Scribner Ames of the University of Chicago in *The Psychology of Religious Experience.* The book has four parts. Part I deals with the history and method of the science; Part II traces racial religious origins; Part III considers the development of religious belief in childhood; Part IV relates religion both to the in-

dividual and to society. The treatment is a liberal one.

One of the popular treatments of the subject is found in George Barton Cutten's *The Psychological Phenomena of Christianity.* The strongest presentation in this book is in his treatment of the abnormal phenomena of religious experiences.

Finally, four other works should be mentioned in the history of the application of psychology to religion. James Bissett Pratt of Williams College wrote *The Psychology of Religious Belief;* Henry W. Clark, *The Philosophy of Christian Experience;* James Stalker, a Scotsman, *Christian Psychology;* and finally another Scotsman, George Steven, *The Psychology of the Christian Soul.*

These early writers had imbibed the spirit of science. They were inspired both by scientific and religious interests, as their biographies reveal. The period was one in which psychology was feeling the impact of biological science in particular. As a result the science of psychology was being reconstructed in the light of this emphasis on scientific findings in this field.

One of the problems early met was whether it might not be sacrilege from the point of view of the churchman to find a science trespassing into the holy of holies. Historically in the middle ages the *Verboten* sign was hung out by the mediaeval church against encroachment by all comers. The scientific spirit was already at work unifying knowledge into one. Should religion and religious knowledge be left outside? Was it so different in kind as not to yield to a common denominator? Or are emotion, suggestion, habit made up of the same stem and variety found at once in the social, economic, and religious areas of living?

It was Coe in *The Spiritual Life* who pointed out that

psychology might even be the handmaiden of religion. He said, "There is reason for doubting whether even the spiritual teachers and guides of the people really grasp the mental processes with which they have to deal — the evident decay of the revival, the alienation from the Church of whole classes of the population, the excess of women over men in Church life, the apparent powerlessness of organized religion to suppress or seriously check the great organized vices and injustices of society, the failure of the Sunday School to make the people or even its own pupils familiar with the contents of the Bible — these facts ought to raise a question as to what, among the matters upon which we have laid stress, is really practical and what mere ignorant blundering."

Strange how his insight into practical religious problems of fifty years ago sounds as if it were written in the nineteen hundred fifties. It is interesting, too, to note how the early students of the subject gave themselves overwhelmingly to the phenomenon of conversion. That, of course, was natural because the basic theme of protestantism has been centered about the making of converts. An inquiry, therefore, into those psychological processes present was a natural starting point.

The scientific inquiries of the anthropologists and historians likewise must be noted in any inquiry into the history of this subject. Are there common points of origin in the study of early religions? Jastrow in his book (see page fifteen) pointed out, "In order to trace its history, to lay bare its doctrines, to examine its ethical principles and to investigate its myths, a consistent application of historical methods is all that is required; but when we proceed further and endeavor to determine the cause of its growth, to penetrate to the secret of its influence, and to account for

its decline, historical research needs to be supplemented by a study of human nature."

In the study of early religions there is in evidence the fact of a common attitude found among early men in their responses and behavior which could be called religious. Regardless of the emphasis, such matters as feeling, thought, and conduct — all are brought to the foreground by one student or another. It was Lessing who observed that although religion is found in the Bible, the foundations of faith must be sought in the human mind and heart.

The inductive and empirical method found its place of importance in the last half of the nineteenth century. Not surprising is it then that this technique of study should be applied by psychology to religion. Then, too, psychology swung in the direction of functionalism in this period, i.e., a study of the psycho-physical organism in its adjustment to the social and physical world. This approach must likewise be taken into account in a study of the psychology of religion.

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CHAPTER II

RELATION OF PSYCHOLOGY TO RELIGION

The history of psychology reflects varying definitions of its subject matter. Very early, psychology was conceived of as being the study of the soul. No modern psychologist would give any consideration to this definition. After all, there is something incongruous about attributing memory, attention, imagery to the soul which now, by general consensus, is thought of as the immortal aspect of personality. To rule out this definition, of course, has no implication whatever of denying the existence of the soul. The idea might be injected at this point that the scientist of the 1950's is wary of any dogmatism of denial.

Psychology has also been defined as a scientific study of the mind. No longer would such definition be tenable. The term *mind* implies that it is a generic something, a stuff located in a well-defined area of the human body. Dynamic functional psychology of today rejects anything that has the flavor of the old faculty psychology. There is no such thing as mind at all; neither is there such a thing as memory or imagination. Nouns are passé. Rather we think of mental functioning, memorizing, imagining — all mental functions.

More recently the conception of psychology as the scientific study of behavier was current. Psychologists in considerable number today would reject such definition as savoring too much of the school of behaviorism. Few psychologists now are willing to ally themselves with one viewpoint only.

Another definition of psychology is that it is a study of consciousness. But is not psychology interested in unconscious states as well? Then, too, any such emphasis tends to identify psychology with the Freudian school of psychoanalysis. The disciples of this school often speak of it as the New Psychology. Again most psychologists prefer not to ally themselves with any one school.

Before the days of experimental psychology, psychology was much thought of as being metaphysical in its inquiries. Rational psychology is related more nearly today to a connection with philosophy and theology. The psychology with which we shall deal veers more to the empirical. Most of the literature in the field of the psychology of religion in the past half century is of that type.

Ruled out of consideration entirely is anything that savors of *pseudo*-psychology. The occult, the mystical tend to be of such a brand. Phenomena of mental telepathy, mind reading, and even what has rather recently been called extra-sensory perception have not been validated by the weight of present-day psychological thinking; hence these will not be considered in this treatise.

Nor shall we be concerned with the subject of behavior. As psychology of religion is not to be confused with theology, neither should it be confused with ethics. Ethical conduct labeled religious is simply outside the pale of our investigation. The psychologist never passes moral judgment. This does not mean that he is either non-moral or immoral. The moral field is simply another and different area of inquiry.

Having clarified the concept of psychology, let us now turn to that of religion. First of all let us admit that the word connotes vagaries. Does the term comprehend everything that passes under that name? Are we to in-

clude oriental religions as well? When a sermon is preached does not the literary element enter? When a religious service is held, is not the aesthetic a big element? If the social element were nonexistent, would there not be a detraction? New England Puritanism is one thing; the camp meeting revivalism of the end of the eighteenth century, another. Roman Catholicism differs at important points from protestantism, which generally differs from one of its children, the Baptist church for example. It will be seen then that there is a mixture of all of these elements and more in the concept. There are biological, psychological, and social implications at least.

The etymological approach is not very rewarding, for the word religion has wandered far from its earlier Latin source where it came either from *religare,* which meant being bound, or from *relegere,* which carried with it the idea of gathering together.

The man of the street has variously defined religion as "doing good to everybody." Another said, "Religion is believing in God"; still another, "Religion means for me the Catholic faith"; while one said, "Religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness."

Many people hold that religion is a natural thing. Before the days of Darwin it was assumed that God at creation gave man a stock of natural ideas. The philosophers of the seventeenth century drew up lists of ideas about God, duty, reward, eternal punishment which they thought were put into man's mind at creation.

Thus mistaken ideas regarding religion grew out of mistaken notions about the implications of evolution. The first was the assumption that religion grew out of the superstitions and customs of early man. But even if the origins of religion be lowly, that would be no reason to

discount it. We do not belittle chemistry because it grew out of alchemy, nor astronomy because it had its germs in astrology. The second mistaken notion to be noted here is the idea that man is only a superior kind of beast. This carried with it the assumption, of course, that man's basic ideas, aspirations were all animal. But even for the savage, life is more than feeding and breeding, which are the two prime characteristics of animal existence.

We would not get far in pursuit of our considerations of the word religion were we not to make a distinction between the soul and body of religion. The soul of religion is the comprehension we have that there is a spiritual reality beyond the world of our senses. The body of religion is to be found in creed, church, organization.

In Leuba's *A Psychological Study of Religion,* the author has collected for the appendix a group of forty-eight different definitions of religion from different writers. It would seem that all of these could be subsumed under three facets: those which emphasize feeling or emotion; those which point up conduct and behavior; and those which stress belief or the intellectual approach.

Here are some examples by well-known writers. Frazer, in *The Golden Bough,* says, "By religion, then, I underderstand a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of Nature and of human life." The second comes from *A Study of Religion* by James Martineau. To him, religion is "the belief in an everliving God, that is, in a Divine Mind and Will ruling the Universe and holding moral relations with mankind." The third is Dr. McTaggart's definition in *Some Dogmas of Religion*: "Religion is clearly a state of mind . . . It seems to me that it may best be described as an emotion resting on a conviction of

harmony between ourselves and the universe at large."

Many scholars are today pointing out that there is abundant reason to create an eclectic definition which would comprehend all three of these emphases, for certainly each does play some part in every well-rounded religion. Thouless has admirably performed the feat when he says, "Religion is a felt practical relationship with what is believed in as a superhuman being or beings."

So much for clearing the ground so that we have a fairly clear idea of what we mean by religion. Now let us examine the legitimacy of the effort to apply psychology to it. Is it sacrilegious for the psychologist to study that behavior which we call religious from a psychological point of view? Churchmen will assert often that in the religious field there are experiences which are *extra sensory, extra perceptual.* God, a Holy Spirit, they say, works immediately, directly upon the mind of the religious person in a manner which is elusive, necessarily, as far as observation and the ability to assess the experience is concerned. Only the school of behaviorism in psychology would deny this postulate.

The modern psychologist, like modern scientists in general in the past few decades, makes allowances for a lot of things which he acknowledges might be of an origin not subject to empirical investigation of the scientist. For a change has come over the true scientist of today. He has dropped his cocksure attitude if he ever had such. He recognizes that science itself is based upon postulates unprovable. Faith, therefore, has become a part and parcel of the scientist's tools. Dogmatism is out! It may be admitted even by the scientist in good standing that God made the world. Faith precedes reason. All of life's ultimates are experienced, not proved.

The psychologist, then, as a true scientist, recognizes his limitations and the fact that his field of investigation is circumscribed. He observes what he can see, behavior and stimuli. When the theologian asserts, which, in the absence of factual evidence to the contrary, is his right, that some things occur as a result of supernatural workings, the psychologist cannot but acquiesce.

It has further been urged by some that the very act of explaining religious phenomena is to cancel out its legitimacy. No conclusion could be further from the truth. Explaining is not explaining away! No religious practice or custom need be relegated to the ash heap just because it follows fixed psychological laws and falls within the realm of the understood. No one disbelieves in the sun simply because its nature and constitution are understood. So should it be with religious experiences.

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CHAPTER III

SOURCES AND METHODS

There are perhaps three main sources of supply for data to be used in the psychological study of religion. First there are the writings of religious people. At the head of the list would come, of course, the Bible itself. The Bible records the religious experiences of religious men. The whole of the Scriptures revolves about people. All that is recorded by these people was first of all experienced by them. No other people of all time have had their life experiences wrapped up with the religious any more than, or even as much as, the Hebrew people.

The faith experiences of these people is a matter of record. Their doubts and fears, their temptations and sins, their prayers and mystical experiences, their ideals and repentance, their revelations and faith are all recorded. So in the record their responses good and bad, their victories and defeats are open to us.

Biographies and autobiographies likewise throw light on the lives of religious persons. The influence of their surroundings and of their backgrounds stands out in relief to the student of the subject.

A second source is that of questioning our contemporaries. This method *par excellence* here is that of the questionnaire. Starbuck used this method in securing data on conversion. The attempt to get objective, factual data by resorting to the subjective is always open to question as to the validity of the results one gets. Some people will

answer as they think they ought to answer; others deliberately falsify to protect themselves; still others will answer in line with their wishes or ideals. Sometimes people will answer with certainty on a recollection that is not too clear in retrospect. This source of data is, like the national polls taken, often unreliable.

A third source lies in the experience of the person himself. We often hear, "I know because I experienced it." The question then crops up, "What actually did I experience?" The emotion is often labeled religious experience because of the religious connotation. Here, too, of course, the question comes up of the validity of empirical knowledge. The British empiricists, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume were driven to what seems obvious absurdities in the light of the rational critique.

After all can we know God at all through our senses? Likely it is true that without sense organs, sense perception, we would know nothing whatever of God; but psychology points out time and again the severe limitations of empirical knowledge. Our reactions as far as our senses are concerned vary with the presence or absence of a sense organ, with the presence or absence of a part of a sense organ, with the range covered by a sense, and with the delicacy of discrimination inherent in a sense organ.

How can sense perception give us a knowledge of time, of justice, of beauty, of freedom? Who ever "saw" a mathematical truth? To be sure our senses are valuable in giving us truth, but they often play us false and we are too close up to the situation to see it as error. Someone besides ourselves must check for us.

The fact of illusions in perceptual experiences is far too common and characteristic of normal human beings to merit discussion here. It may tend to throw reasonable

doubt on the experiences which some good souls claim for themselves. Hallucinations, too, are closely allied with illusions. Recently a good woman declared she had a vision of Christ, whom she says she saw come into her room and sit down on a chair near her bed to converse with her. If she had stopped there, psychology would be powerless to pass judgment by declaring that this woman had a hallucination. She went on to repeat what Christ said. In substance it was a command from Him that she expose a purported love letter supposedly written by the husband of a friend of hers. The ethics of the case dictated otherwise and suggested it must have been a hallucinatory experience.

Again a minister had another clergyman come to him to say, "God revealed to me in a dream last night that your interpretation of a certain scripture is in error and you are deceived by the devil." The minister spoken to promptly rejoined, "I reject your dream because God is an ethical God and would not talk about me behind my back. If he wished to straighten me out he would come to me directly." A sound answer with a touch of humor in it!

It should be realized, too, that when we try to analyze our own mental states those states vanish or become dim. Try to analyze an emotion you are experiencing and lo the emotion has effervesced. Hence there are many pitfalls to be taken into account in drawing upon ourselves as a source of data.

Now let us turn to the methods to be employed. Although we have pointed out some of the limitations of the empirical method the fact still remains that it is one of the best methods we have. Before the time of Roger Bacon what could be termed science was essentially speculation.

This is not an indictment against speculation in general, for the Greek speculative philosophers before the time of Christ frequently possessed rich insight. Their intentions are not to be despised; nor the intuitive truths they apprehended, discounted. Truth is not gained by one route alone — much less the scientific one — for with all respect due modern science, such great scientists of our era as A. N. Whitehead, Sir James Jeans, A. S. Eddington, and J. Y. Simpson have pointed up the fact that all truth has not been arrived at *via* the scientific route. In spite of the mass of truth that is known, scientists are first to acknowledge that much more is unknown. Actually science leans for support on faith, axioms, postulates, unproved and unprovable, just the same as religion does. The route of intuitions and the route of speculation, although characterized by severe limitations, are nevertheless valid methods of arriving at truth.

The route of induction as a method in the study must perforce have our respect. Observation and experimentation, the two key words which guided Roger Bacon, are still indispensable today if we are to approach the study scientifically. If we are to accept the law of gravity as universally valid, somebody must test it out to see if it works at the North and South Poles as well as at the equator, at an altitude of five thousand feet as well as at sea level, when the weather is zero as well as in summer heat, etc. Having examined a sufficient number of cases under all conceivable conditions, having passed through the stages of guess, hypothesis, and theory, we are in a position to call our findings a law or principle, fact, or truth.

By the same inductive procedure we must apply psychology to religion. The conclusions reached will be valid

only if empirical, inductive technique has been followed. As science has no secret covered place in which it works and no patented techniques which it employs; so psychology of religion must work in the open, using the accepted techniques of application.

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CHAPTER IV

STATUS OF RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGY

The naive concept of religion is pretty much an identification of religion with emotion. It was so from the earliest manifestations of religious behavior. When religion becomes intellectualized, it is then that theology is born. Man by nature likes to identify his practices, even his possessions with himself. A criticism of his preferred style of house architecture, his automobile, dog, is a slap at his ego. It follows by nature that man holds a sort of disdain, contempt for those things and ideas beyond the area of his own self.

Very early this division of right and error in religious thought and practice appeared. Evans' ideas of religious worship were accumulated on the side of belief, the intellectual concept of God. The emotional preference and practice of Mr. Smith for the emotional is looked on by Evans as being primitive, undeveloped, warped, even childish. The humanists who cling to some vestige of religion look askance upon everybody who does not put good social conduct foremost even in an exclusive setting. In turn the emotionalist condemns the intellectualist for being cold and unreligious. What is wrapped up with one's self is good; if characteristic of the other fellow, it is to be looked down upon.

So then we have had our behaviorists, our emotionalists, our intellectualists in divisive religious camps. Because quantitatively and historically the weight has been

with the emotionalists, let us look at them at this time. For them any other emphasis savored of non-religion. Undoubtedly the emphasis placed necessarily upon conversion experience in religion had a great deal to do with the fact that this experience has been given a foremost place in our conjecturing on the subject of religion.

In the light of psychology what is an emotion? A tentative definition in simplest psychological terms would consider it a highly charged state of feeling. Modern psychology has long since broken with the old faculty psychology which held man's nature had three sides, the affective, the will, and the intellect. Classifications are always arbitrary, and life is not so simply classified as some would have it. Neat pigeonholes to put things in by way of explanation are satisfying, to be sure, but not often true to the realities of being.

To understand the nature of emotions properly, let us make some pointed observations necessary to analysis. In the first place, an emotion cannot occur without the cold intellectual process functioning in the form of perception. Emotions cannot occur in vacuums. They have to be feelings about *something*. Emotions are never divorced from their ideational origin. Idea, then, the perceptive idea, is at the heart of the whole emotional state which develops. In other words it is absurd to talk about some people's being emotional, and other people's being cold and intellectual. Everybody is emotional, and everybody who is not a hypophrenetic is intellectual. Of course, in both cases there is a variation in degree, but the judgment meted out when one is judged emotional and another non-emotional is based upon another factor entirely which will be discussed shortly.

A second observation, in order here, is that physical

changes of the organism may enhance the emotion. An exciting stimulus may result in such physiological changes as quickened heartbeat and respiration, changes in the pattern of muscle tension, rushing of blood at an accelerated rate, and also marked changes in the activity of certain of the glands, the ductless ones in particular. There has been much debate as to whether this physiological activity occurs before or after the emotion is sensed. For our purpose here we need not enter such discussion. Suffice it to say that this physiological activity is a very great ingredient in a total emotional situation. It is possible that the supposed distinction between qualitatively different emotions, i.e., anger, fear, love, hate may be explained largely on the basis of such physiological activity.

Third, a feeling tone is characteristic of every emotion. The psychologist Wundt distinguished three such states, viz., pleasantness and unpleasantness, tension and relaxation, excitement and depression or calm. Emotions differ in kind, i.e., quality only as pleasantness and unpleasantness and excitement and depression are involved. Such states involve the whole of the organism; are complex. This concept would rule out some emotions being recognized as religious, some aesthetic, others as social. Actually, emotions do differ quantitatively, but practically the qualitative differences are superficial and depend upon the ideational pattern. Thus a prostrate worshiper before the Virgin Mary on Ash Wednesday is having a religious emotion but only because of the total situation involved, i.e., the ramifications of the perceptual experience.

Fourth, emotion and emotional expression are two different things. Failure to recognize this fact is the explanation of many an error. The "holy roller" is not filled with more emotion than the sedate observer necessarily;

he is only manifesting overtly an expression of that emotion.

A corollary of the fourth is the fact that the pattern of emotional expression is always determined by educational processes. Here is a small group worshiping in a tiny mission hall. Attendant upon singing is the handclapping exercise. Everybody does it. It is contagious, yes, but the practice has a traditional imperative. Such expression is a mark, the test of the religious man. Comparable expressions involve greater or less degrees of physical responses, but usually the form taken characterizes the uniqueness of the group and sets it off as a sect different from its contemporaries. Thus one group will practice jumping, another laughing hysterically, another jerking, another holding up hands while singing, another shouting. These physical practices again can be broken down to differentiate the group labels. For example, one group in the shouting category will cry out, "Halleluia"; another, "Jesus, Jesus"; another, "Amen"; still another, "Praise the Lord." A further discussion of mob psychology involved will be discussed in a later chapter. In passing, suffice it to say the laws of habit enter in at this point in sealing the pattern of the expression.

The form taken in emotional expression in religion is of interest to the student of religion. Whereas in accordance with the fact of suggestion in psychology as well as the laws of social psychology, religious expression may take almost any form if the suggestion continues long enough; the fact remains that, for the most part, the levels of expression are dependent pretty much on the intellectual insights which are born of critical thinking. Thus such primitive expressions as jumping and shouting might be classified on the lower strata of emotional expressions.

These expressions bear a pretty direct relation to the isolated personality of a person who has not had his mental life exposed to critical thinking.

Recently the writer had occasion to penetrate an isolated rural section in the deep South. At first, faint sounds of some kind of human-made noise filled the atmosphere. It grew louder as distance to its source was traveled until the source itself was reached. A wooden church with old windows out and with people gathered about each window looking in revealed that a meeting was in progress. It was a summer night. The sermon was finished. Small groups gathered around as many as half a dozen persons who were stretched out stiff on the floor. Several of them were carried out into the open. The crowd was all praying for the power to fall on the prostrated persons. The crowd swayed back and forth as they prayed and sang. To them this was "Holy Ghost religion."

Once it was thought that an emotion was some sort of mental disturbance which was expressed through the musculature of the body. Today we understand that muscular changes may indeed be a part of an emotional experience along with the operation of the ductless glands, acceleration of heartbeat and of the circulatory and digestive systems. All of these are involved in the emotional experience. To see the fruition of an emotional experience, one must take into account not only these muscular changes but all resultant behavior, good or bad: one's tensions, loyalties, and even the acme of action found in art, literature, or music.

Emotion may also be carried out on a high level of response. William James, pointing out years ago that when one is stirred up emotionally he should find a proper outlet physically, suggested such person might be reacting on

the highest level if he went home and wrote out a check for some philanthropy or for some religious cause.

That religious experience has its emotional counterpart is not to be denied. Many people, however, have their emotions attached to religion devoid of the extremes cited. Some are mild in expression. The same observation might be mentioned in other fields. Some people yell at a sports event; some are moved to tears by music. Again it is the emotional maturity level reached by the person, plus the educational processes which have been at work, which determines the kind of response made. This explains in part at least why religious experience differs from time to time in the same person, from religion to religion, from sect to sect. The concrete religious situation gives color to the emotion and determines whether it shall be called fear, awe, love, reverence, or submission. Religious experience is emotional, but the existence of a purely religious emotion is questionable.

Some writers have emphasized religion as being an attitude which is said to be born of man's social outlook and evaluations. There are dangers in a loose use of the word "attitude." Attitudes are not states but change according to our purposes. Attitude is really a pattern or mental set. Set involves the nerves and muscles for the purpose of conditioning attention. The holy man of India has one kind of attitude, the Mohammedan another, the Christian still another. Each attitude grows out of his religious experience. Religion then cannot properly be defined in terms of an attitude, for attitudes are essentially secondary considerations.

Emotion also is wrapped up in one's belief. Believing is an attitude. Belief in miracles conditions one in a well-defined manner, as does every other belief one has. One

feels deeply about his beliefs. He resents anyone's derogating them; under certain conditions he will be willing to die for them. The armed forces recognized the power of belief when they attempted to brief the rookie soldier so that he would believe the enemy was barbarian, pagan, or what not. Such briefing was conceived to be a morale builder.

So the beliefs of religion are satisfying in part at least. They give most men a satisfying something which relieves tension and doubt and tends to adjust them to their social and physical world.

Man by nature craves an explanation of the objects of his wonder. The physical background of Greece has often been cited as an incentive to ancient man's cosmological explanations of the universe. It should also be noted here that man's subjective experiences have been equally effective in stimulating his curiosity as well as have the objective. Just sitting and thinking have produced concrete conclusions. Newton, it is said, reached a possible solution of the problem of the movement of the moon by just thinking about it without benefit of test tube, laboratory, or telescope.

When man began to intellectualize, religious experience took on something of the orderly, the systematic; and theology came to be born. Theology is simply the intellectual expression of religion. The psychologist as he penetrates the field of religion does not at this point deign to rule out revelation. Indeed, the psychologist does not even try to explain any miracles in the field of religion. Explaining is not to be confused with explaining away. Theology has often been criticized as being cold and inadequate. It is both, but that fact does not invalidate it.

Man's thinking is always changed by changing knowl-

edge. Every philosophy is the product of the age in which it flourishes. Theology changes from age to age as man's thinking changes. Man's religious experience, his emotional experience changes less. Indeed, it changes little, varying only slightly from religion to religion, from time to time, from individual to individual.

Embodied in religion, too, is the behavior aspect. How one feels and what one believes find expression logically in how one acts. At least that ought to be so. True, some persons have so narrowly conceived religion that high religious emotion ends there, and a highly developed system of theology ends there without taking the highest ethical conduct into account. Herein Christianity differs, or should differ, from other religions in that Christ's feelings and teachings carried over into conduct of the highest ethical order.

Another aspect of the present status of psychology and religion is to be noted in the interest shown by medical practitioners in relating their work to religion, and *vice versa,* in the profound sensing of the need on the part of religious educators of connecting religion with medical knowledge, in their understanding of the behavior of souls ministered to by the church. Psychosomatic medicine, in vogue so widely today, studies the whole person. His fears, his misgivings, his loss of a sense of security often stem back to religious conflicts. Restoring wholeness to a person involves taking into account his religious concepts, his feeling about God, sin, the nature of his taboos, his sanctions. Specific drugs just will not turn the trick. The soul needs remedies as well. Wholesome religion can provide them, in line with the understanding of modern man, upon which light has been thrown by studies in the field of

abnormal psychology. This phase of the subject will be treated more fully in the chapter on Religion and Healing.

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CHAPTER V

RELIGIOUS ORIGINS

Some recognition needs to be given to two factors which are basic to an understanding of any religious experience. I refer first to what may be termed the religious attitude. Attitudes in general are born of conditioning circumstances which have been more or less persistently present in the formation of the psycho-physical personality. Man gets his attitudes from longstanding associations with parents, social groups, intellectual constants; in short, with those environmental influences of longstanding. These forces have molded characteristic outlooks in each of us. The trained historian weighs with wonted approach the panorama of events in our fast-moving era. The scientist has a fixed reaction to any unusual phenomena with which he may be confronted. The business man weighs the propositions made him with accustomed techniques of understanding. So the man with religious training reacts with a reverence to those phenomena which have a religious connotation for him. A religious attitude, then, must be taken into account in understanding a man's religious responses.

A second basic factor which we must be alive to if we are to understand religious experience is the acquired disposition of a person in the presence of religious forces — in short, his acquired sentiments about religious things. Now a sentiment is an affective experience attached to an object. Such sentiment may either grow out of the in-

trinsic worth of an object or, more important, may be conditioned by the extrinsic value attached to an object. So in the case, for example, of the watch which is yours. It is a Hamilton and cost a hundred dollars. That is its intrinsic value. Your mother, now dead, gave it to you. You would not take two hundred or even five hundred for it. It has that much or more worth to you extrinsically. You have a sentiment attached to it conditioned by the source of the gift.

So in everyday life, we have sentiments attached to things. An ardent democrat will almost fight when someone ridicules that party in his presence. So in religion such names as Catholic, Baptist, carry attachments of sentiment. Religious behavior to be understood, must take into account these two substrata concepts, attitudes and sentiments.

One of the sentiments which certainly flowers out in connection with religion is love. Jesus' religious teaching pointed out that love of God and love of man summed up pretty well the totality of all that might be termed religious. Christianity goes back basically to the concept that God is love, by which is meant, God is a creature who loves, love being his highest attribute. Now love as a human experience has an interesting evolution. It first appears in the human family as a love for self, for experiences which satisfy the ego. Biologically, practically uncontrolled are such native satisfactions giving such urges as sucking, relieving kidney and bowel discomfort, smoothing the surface of the skin. Native reactions, judged by any moral norm, are selfish. Every activity entered upon is for one's own satisfaction.

When the time comes that the child makes a distinction between the concept that his universe is part of himself,

made for him, to be identified with him and the concept that there are other universes, viz., his brother's or his mother's; then he reaches a new ideational horizon. The one who constantly gives him satisfaction as he grows older is not himself, but someone outside his sphere, his mother. He comes to appreciate her as a big source of his satisfactions. Primarily now he loves someone in addition to himself. He loves Mother because she ministers to his needs. She satifies his wants. She is still a selfish consideration to be sure; but at least his love life, if he is normal, includes her in the second stage of development.

Junior's love finds another horizon as he grows older and advances toward the adolescent period. He now finds satisfaction in associating with, playing with those of his own sex. He does not yet mingle with those of the other sex; then he would be called a "sissy," and that appellation would crush him. Now he is one of the gang. He is a member of the boys' club. Mingling with boys gives him satisfaction, in that he has extended his affections up the ladder to embrace those of his own sex.

Once into adolescence, our boy soon finds satisfaction in extending his love horizon so as now to include the opposite sex. He now becomes gallant, sacrificing, tender as mood and circumstances may require, and he is now advancing psychologically in a normal fashion, loving a member of the opposite sex. Often he becomes blind at this stage to the just claims of the other fellows, his parents, and even to his own needs. Sacrificing now enters the picture.

Progression into a fifth stage is a normal experience of the average boy. He becomes altruistic, interested in a cause, will sacrifice for the principles at stake. He will give himself wholeheartedly to them, forgetful of self. This

stage of emotional developement is altruism itself, and it is here that dedication to religion is possible. He is perfectly willing to efface self and to give himself to something bigger than himself. So then the passing into the emotional period where the claims of religion become challenging is a perfectly normal experience. Indeed it is the abnormal person who is not susceptible. For either an arrestment in one of these stages or a retrogression to it is a symptom of abnormality.

The normal person, as he passes from stage to stage, still holds fragmentarily, at least, to each preceding stage. That is, a young man in love may still love his parents and even himself if he is normal. To fail to progress from the first stage or to retrogress to it causes one to be known as a Narcissist. The term refers to Ovid's story of Narcissus who, because of his abnormal beauty, scorned all females and fell in love with himself. Those who would love him, the story goes, prayed to Nemesis for vengeance. Nemesis answered by causing Narcissus to fall in love with his own image which was reflected in a stream of water into which he gazed. The Narcissist loves not only his physical self but his intellectual attainments and other qualities as well. The absorption in this stage is characterized by such symptoms as thumb sucking, nail biting, gum chewing, or tobacco using. Autoerotic practices characterize this stage.

Again where there is arrestment or retrogression into the parental love stage and when one manifests abnormal love for parents, we have either the Oedipus complex, which is an abnormal love of a boy for his mother, or the Electra complex, which represents an abnormal love of a girl for her father. The term "Oedipus" refers to the

myth of Oedipus who unknowingly married his own mother, Jocasta.

If one remains in or returns to the emotional stage in which love of his own sex predominates, the abnormality is called homosexuality. In this stage there are great gradations, stemming from hermaphroditism to simply a crush on one of the same sex, or it may go to the extreme of caresses or even pronounced abnormal sexual behavior.

It should be noted at this point that a study of religious origin reveals that the early manifestation of what ordinarily passes as religious behavior is never religious behavior simon pure. Complications of various sorts are detectable. Fundamentally, moods, basic interests, food supply, shelter, protective behavior, the expression of aesthetic desires — all of these are but a few of the factors to be reckoned with. Man is a complex being. He is flesh and he is spirit. Adjustment of this psycho-physical individual to his social and physical world is demanded at every step of the way.

We know today that religion is mixed with other interests and expressions. Sermons are seldom if ever religious discourses, for example. Foreign ingredients, pulled from the literary, the ethical, the sociological, the historical, the philosophical, not only are sprinkled in, but indeed sometimes may dominate. Why did crowds flock to hear Billy Sunday or William Lyon Phelps? Hardly because of the fact that the discourses were religious and religious only. Many an obscure clergyman preaching nearby likely often packed more religious subject matter into his sermon. Is it true, it has been asked, that the church treasurer accepts his election solely to be of religious service? or does he not feel a certain pride in the office — pride at power, at being able to sign his name to the checks? In the Hopi In-

dians' rain dance, is religious implication alone to be recognized, or is there present also the aesthetic? Would ladies come together in the Ladies Aid if there were no tea or coffee served? In truth, religious expression today does not exist pure and unmixed. The mixture is not with one, but maybe a thousand different ingredients growing out of man's biological, social, and psychological urges.

An illustration will enforce the connection of religion with the food supply among primitive peoples. There lives isolated in southern India in the Nilgiri hills a people known as the Todas. Their staple diet is buffalo milk, from which they make butter and buttermilk. Some of their buffalos are conceived to be sacred and the taboo is placed on their milk. The church and the priests traditionally make safe the buffalo milk. The church is a dairy and the priests are virtually dairymen. There is a sacred and secular compartment in the dairy. A ritual accompanies the transfer of milk from the sacred to the secular.

A more up-to-date connection is to be found in the case of the American Indian, John Rave, a dissolute sort of fellow who became converted, according to his story, by eating the herb peyote. He ate peyote one night in Oklahoma and after that his life was changed.

"It is now twenty-three years since I first ate peyote," Rave testified, "and I am still doing it (1912). Before that my heart was filled with murderous thoughts. I wanted to kill my brother and my sister. It seemed to me that my heart would not feel good until I killed one of them. All my thoughts were fixed on the warpath. This is all I thought of. Now I know that it was because the evil spirit possessed me that I felt that way. I was suffering from a disease. I even desired to kill myself; I did not care to live. That feeling, too, was caused by this evil spirit living with-

in me. Then I ate this medicine and everything changed. The brother and sister I wanted to kill before, I became attached to and I wanted them to live. The medicine had accomplished this."

It has been urged by some that religion should be discounted because of its lowly origin. By the same token we should have to discount chemistry, which grew out of alchemy, and astronomy because of its stemming from astrology. Neither the value nor the truth of a belief is conditioned by its origin. Science itself started in the area of superstition. Religion, then, granted it has a lowly origin, is not to be discounted thereby.

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CHAPTER VI

INTRODUCTION OF MENTAL LIFE IN RELIGION

The old psychic triad in psychology was composed of the intellect, knowing; the will, willing; and the emotion, feeling. Faculty psychology, to which this approval belonged, no longer is subscribed to by the modern psychologist. But modern psychology cannot escape the continuous looming into prominence first of feeling states, then of ideational panorama. The age-long question has been, which is first or which is more important.

It has already been pointed out that the emotions cannot exist in a vacuum, that emotions as a matter of fact do have ideational content, that it is improper to conceive of one person as being intellectual, another emotional. The old willing side of the triangle will, of course, be omitted, for psychologists are wary today of speaking of the will. The Thorndike concept of the will is simply that it is an idea plus either a feeling of consent or rejection.

"Why do you believe in God?" Most of us like to think that we are beings capable of thinking and that the convictions which are ours have validity because they have been reached through intellectual processes. As a matter of fact, the old arguments for the existence of God projected by systematic theologies are unfamiliar to the rank and file of men. Mediaeval theologians were certain that the existence of God could be proved. After all, was not the cosmological argument indisputable? Or again,

drawing from epistomology in conjunction with its physical and metaphysical foundations, was not absolute proof offered which could not be gainsaid for the existence of God? It must be admitted that to face the unbelieving man of the street with such proofs gained never a convert.

Actually, most people believe in God because they are taught as children to believe. Some people will say that they have grounds for their belief. Such persons, when pressed, usually fall back upon personal experiences. They felt they had been helped in some of life's experiences, in some crisis, loss, sorrow, death. Very few people would contend that their belief in God was conditioned by rational necessity. Religion, then, is first of all a matter of the heart; secondarily, a matter of the intellect. Not only is this true in the area of religion, but in other fields of life as well. Few of us believe in God because reasoning processes were resorted to in order to reach such conclusions. Most people believe in God because they were so taught as children. Only a few have been driven to such belief because of personal experiences, i.e., help through prayer in a crisis. Still fewer believe in God because of the operation of moral law; still fewer because they believe that otherwise they could not explain life and the universe.

Some of the most fundamental beliefs we have in religion we hold because we have used two routes to find them, viz., intuitive and speculative. These two routes to truth are not to be despised; or need they yield to that one often deified today, the scientific. A well-known professor was once engaged in a discussion of a controversial question. One of his colleagues said, "My position is right because I can prove it scientifically," to which our friend replied, "Then I will not believe it; you must prove it poetically before I will accept it." That extreme rejoinder

brings into focus a truth now widely accepted by men of learning, viz., there are various routes to truth. Science is one road, speculation or inference another, intuition a third. Of course, it is to be recognized that dangers inhere in using these two latter routes, but such pitfalls do not affect their employment fundamentally. Realistically, we constantly resort to these two. I am certain the ceiling of the room in which I now sit will not cave in. Scientifically certain? No. I have no scientific evidence. You say I am then not *certain*. I reply I am, else I would sit here ill at ease, fearful. Actually, even scientific knowledge is based upon postulates unproved by definition; assumptions believed to be true. For whoever proved an axiom, a postulate?

It is futile to say that we shall prove, by logical reasoning process, all we believe. We cannot. We need not. Lord Mansfield is quoted as saying once, "Trust to your own good sense in forming your opinion, but beware of attempting to state the grounds of your judgments. The judgment will probably be right, the argument will infallibly be wrong."

Another emphasis of today which deserves consideration here is the modern viewpoint that man is a unitary whole. He is not part mind, part body, part soul, but a composite unit made up of many aspects. So the fine line once drawn between mental sickness and physical sickness has been pretty much obliterated. Recognized physical sickness has mental phases; mental sickness, its physical relationship. So in medicine today we have emphasized the psychosomatic approach. It is not the soul alone that needs saving, but the mind and body as well. The body and mind cannot be treated without ministering to the soul.

At this juncture the question naturally comes up as to

how trustworthy are convictions arrived at through the method of faith or intuition. How can faith be distinguished from superstition? Superstitions, it must be remembered, still flourish today. Even in the absence of evidence, and sometimes contrary to it, superstitions may exist. A person imprisoned by superstitions resembles the man who had hallucinations. Convince him by logic he is wrong, but a minute later he will reassert the belief in the hallucinatory experiences. Those who believe in superstition are never convinced by intellectual processes. Their beliefs are imbedded deeply in their emotions. They want to believe what they believe. Faith always operates in accordance with reason; never against it. Just the opposite is true of superstition. When a thing is demonstrated to be unreasonable, faith in it is dead, but not superstition.

A scientist tells the story of hiring a boatman to row him out to the bar of the harbor where there were strange noises made at certain times. The boatman tried to dissuade his passenger from exploring the spot, maintaining that misfortune had overtaken those in the past who had tried to investigate the noises. In the face of the scientist's persistence, the boatman acquiesced. The scientist discovered that the rocks were honeycombed, and the wind, at times, rushing in as the water rose and fell, was found to be the cause of the moaning. This was explained to the boatman who replied, "You may say what you like, sir, but she do moan."

What are the tests of truth? one may inquire at this point. There are many inadequate age-old tests. First, there is the criterion of custom and tradition which take on authority. Much in religion is believed thereby. The church for many ages told its communicants what to believe. The authoritarian European parent likewise molds

the opinions of his children. "Theirs is not to question why."

A second test employed by many is the *consensus gentium*. Mass opinion is overwhelming in its effect in creating uniformity of thought. It produces fear in the recalcitrant member of the group. Witness the devastating throttling of free thinking today, the colleges and universities included. A leftist idea immediately categorizes a man as a communist. Note in the following how universally everyone would tend to agree:

Democracy is best safeguarded by frequent voting.

Office by election rather than by appointment insures a democratic form of government.

It is morally right to curb criticism of our government by communists and socialists.

God will heal everyone who asks Him for healing.

A church without a revival once or twice a year is a dead church.

Power needs to be taken away from Washington and our state governments and given back to local communities.

Home rule is needed.

Where racial prejudice exists in a community, colored people should be barred from church attendance and membership.

We need more stringent divorce laws which will make divorce practically impossible.

The practice of birth control is scripturally unsound.

More people are going insane today than ever before.

Climate has a great deal to do with the curing of tuberculosis.

If we ate the right kind of food, we would not be sick.

It is much worse for a woman to smoke or to use

alcoholic beverages than it is for a man to do so.

The child of a cigarette-smoking mother will in at least eight cases out of ten be defective or succumb in infancy.

The Supreme Court is our greatest bulwark to insure the perpetuation of democracy.

Senators McCarthy and Jenner are making the most noteworthy contributions to the saving of the country from communism.

Pugnacity is bred so deep in our bones and marrow that a warless world can never be realized. It is just a fine, idealistic dream.

Capitalism is the best economic philosophy because man can never get away from the profit motive as the spring of production.

Social security for all will in the end undermine free enterprise.

Socialized medicine is an evil philosophy and un-American.

A third test is wishful thinking. Caesar long ago pointed out, "Men most easily believe what they desire to believe." Bacon warned against this tendency when he referred to "idols of the den" in *Novum Organum*:

> The idols of the den are those of each individual; for everybody (in addition to the errors common to the race of man) has his own individual den or cavern, which intercepts and corrupts the light of nature, either from his own peculiar and singular disposition, or from his education and intercourse with others, or from his reading, and the authority acquired by those whom he reverences and admires, or from different impressions produced on the mind, as it happens to be preoccupied and predisposed, or equable and tranquil, and the like;

so that the spirit of man (according to its several dispositions) is variable, confused and, as it were, actuated by chance.

We have already referred to the trustworthiness of some kinds of intuition. It can be unreliable as a test for truth as well as reliable. Particularly is this true in religion. Mystic souls and souls who would find justification for their conduct will often speak of being led by the spirit of God. The problem, of course, is to find whether the inner voice is a projection of one's own desire or indeed an impression of God's Spirit.

The pragmatic test of truth was popularized by William James. If a thing works, it must be valid. The question is for whom is it practical. Also it is said that goodness is the test, but the question comes up as to whether a thing might be good for one and bad for another. Is it not true, too, that truth and value are not identical?

The empiricists would have us believe that truth, if it comes from the senses, is reliable. Suffice it to say at this point that limitations are to be recognized in evaluating sense perception. Truth is limited by the fact that the range covered by a sense is limited as is also the delicacy of discrimination. Moreover, some sense organs function only in part, as is the case of red-green color blindness. Illusions are normal for normal people. Under a set of given conditions we should see things falsely.

The final and most acceptable test for truth is logical coherence. If the facts involved in the proposition are not contradictory, if all the elements going to make the conclusion hang together, then the resultant truth may be accepted. Self consistency must characterize the search for truth. Religious truths, then, must not be susceptible to contradiction by known facts if they are to be accepted.

Blind credulity is not faith which leads to truth; neither is faith valid when opposed by an array of counter facts. Reason is not, on the other hand, infallible because it does not invade areas of life outside the abstract, or at least certainly not the religious. When possible, the head and the heart should work together, but in areas where they cannot, then each should hold sway in the proper field.

Religion may basically be a matter of feeling, but it is feeling about something. Reason cannot be pushed out the window. For such religion, reason is often hand-maiden; never an enemy. Kant rightly said pure reason cannot alone give us God, freedom, immortality. Such truths are arrived at, said he, by practical reason, by which he meant moral conviction. It is at this point that empiricism or pragmatism may enter. Religion, if sound, need have no fears of the empirical or pragmatic test in so far as it is possible to apply such tests. There are always points where faith transcends the empirical.

In all fields of life there has been coming a recognition of the fact that the organism is one. Psychosomatic medicine represents such concept, for example, in the field of medicine. As figurative expression, then, we may still tell of heart and mind; but functionally, not only mental functions but physical ones as well are integrated in producing John Smith, personality.

Religion is a venture when it is at its best, a venture in reaching out for God; and, in the process, mental functions, regardless of under what name they may sail, all interact in the effort.

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CHAPTER VII

RELIGION AND INSTINCTS

Is religion an instinct? Twenty and more years ago the question was thrust to the fore by that school of religious educators who veered toward a naturalistic interpretation of religious behavior. Before that, the idea was a naively assured conviction. To answer the question in the negative would be wrong; the affirmative answer is likewise incorrect. There is no Yes-or-No answer. In entering upon a discussion of that question a number of considerations must be taken into account.

In the first place there is to be recognized what we might call the psychological law of swings. This is simply a recognition of the fact that human nature reacts, under the influence of critical thinking, to the assumption of another position, often the diametric opposite. The evidence of swing is apparent in every field of knowledge. In philosophy, now monism is in vogue; now pluralism. Once it is absolute idealism of Plato; then it is realism; then the subjective idealism of the British empiricists; then the rationalism of Des Cartes. In economics it is now protective tariff; now freer trade. In psychology itself it is introspectionism once; then behaviorism; then Freudianism, to mention just a few.

Those who subscribed to the instinct theory are represented by a distinguished array of psychologists including such men as William McDougall as the chief protagonist. The swing to the other extreme is represented by the be-

haviorists, of whom perhaps the chief exponent was John B. Watson. Does man possess or not possess instincts is an antecedent question then to the query as to whether religion is an instinct.

A second consideration is a necessary inquiry into what is meant by instinct. How is it to be defined? Another vital question germane here is whether instinct is just the singular of instincts. James succinctly crystalized his own thinking on the matter by saying that instinct is the faculty of acting in such a way as to produce certain ends, without foresight of those ends, and without previous education in the performance. That concept tended to be a mechanistic one. So then instinctive action is definite, blind, and unlearned. Instinct is a scientific term pointing up the fact that this kind of behavior is native, whereas instincts are ways or forms which native behavior takes. That there is instinct cannot be gainsaid; that behavior patterns which are labeled instincts are inherited is open to question.

Now pugnacity in man is different from pugnacity in the hornet. Jealousy in man is a complicated reaction with emotional content which expresses itself in varied forms. It is not simon pure. Behavior conditioning may be recognized as one analyzes the pugnacious reaction. Gone, then, are the easy explanations given with the wave of the hand and the articulate fixed statement, "It is an instinct." Not thus simply is human conduct to be explained.

Instinct here is supposed to be a pattern in the central nervous system, innate, uninfluenced by the environmental situation. The growth, shape, and nature of behavior are determined from within. The pattern finds its root in the germ plasm. The genes are the determinants. Thus human beings do not learn how to fall in love, play, be curious, be angry, preserve self.

A first test of a mechanistically conceived instinct is that the pattern of response is innately determined. Food-getting is present at birth, but its forms vary from the enveloping action of the amoeba to the sucking reaction of higher organisms with their sense organs, muscles, and nervous systems. Obviously, then, instinct does not mean the same thing for different forms of life. The instinct of the amoeba is not identical with the instinct of the vertebrate or of the mammal. The structural organzation of the organism is related to the simple or complex environment, as the case may be, in which life finds itself. To classify the varied types of behavior found in man in the same category as the simplest form of life would patently be absurd.

Even life less complex than man's is subject to the varied and changing conditions, physical and social, in which one finds himself. Does a canary sing? Yes, to be sure. But the Andreasburg Roller will sing in one manner if he is placed with the Hartz Mountain Warbler, and in another if trained by the German organ. Naturally a singer? Well, literally, no! The instinct of the lowest form of life is not the instinct of man.

A second test of a mechanistically conceived instinct is that behavior is *a priori* determined, i.e., prior to any learning exposure, the pattern is there. A third test reflected in this definition of instinct is the universality of the behavior pattern. Certain forms of behavior, it is pointed out, are found among all animal life, including mankind. A fourth evidence is what has been called the persistence of form. While new appeals, different stimuli, may be found for bringing into play the instinct, and even some slight variations in response detectable, the essence, it is argued, is constant. Thus, love will always be love in a sort of fixed

pattern, regardless of how it may have been called forth and irrespective of what form it may take.

Finally, there is the all-out, overwhelming urge to be found in this conception of instinct. Accordingly here, the urge commands everything and everybody. It asserts itself in spite of obstacles. Anger may be controlled maybe momentarily, or maybe a little, but in the end it overpowers and controls in its assertion, so powerful is the instinct.

Now there is a second conception of instinct growing largely out of the Freudian school of psychology. It is a dynamic viewpoint. The individual here is looked upon as a whole, an individual who is adjusting to his social and physical world by overcoming all stimuli. The behavior of an individual here is not that of reacting to a stimulus, but rather is that of overcoming it. This process stems from what has been called drives, of which the following are usually emphasized: the drive for satisfactory physical comforts, the drive for sex, and the drive for ascendency over one's fellows or over impeding obstacles.

The drive definition of instinct conceives instincts as being of such force as to be uncontrollable and unconquerable in the last analysis. They are there, regardless of age or surrounding conditions which would merely modify their expression. Moreover, these drives may be nebulus in the sense that they do not have a well-defined form of expression. The evidence of the force of these drives is asserted when there is a repressive force at work. Maybe the repressive force will delay the drive assertion or maybe even change its course, but onward it will go, nevertheless, sweeping behavior even into the pattern of the abnormal.

It is the author's opinion that the seemingly dia-

metrically opposed positions of these two schools of psychology — instinct as mechanistic and instinct as drive — in their definitions of instinct are not so far apart as they would seem to be on the surface. Can it not be true that there are instincts and at the same time be true that there are no instincts? We think so if we project the question of just which animals are being considered, whether lower forms of life or human beings. McDougall's adherents would seem to be thinking primarily about the lower forms of life. Much of his time is given over to a consideration of the behavior of insects. The Watson behaviorists, on the other hand, speak primarily of human beings. Here, to be sure, there are no instincts such as McDougall notes in insects and assumes man to have.

Strictly speaking, for man there are no instincts inasmuch as there are countless reactions to a given stimulus. Schoen rightly comments, "What animal are you talking about?" The school of behaviorism in psychology has made a contribution by contending that there are no instincts, provided it confines its observations to human beings; for actually man's complex behavior is the resultant of habit conditioned by training and educative processes which have been at work since birth. Man's physiological structure gives basic direction to his urges, with the resultant movements.

For animals, William McDougall's insistence upon instincts has validity. Certainly the lower forms of life have well-defined behavior patterns which are pretty well set. Insects, for example, at birth perform very definite responses to given stimuli. By and large, such fixed reactions suffer little variation with maturation.

Now let us examine more closely these various criteria to see if one or more would support religion. Is there an

inborn behavior pattern of religious behavior which always responds to certain stimuli? Looking at all animal life from the lowest to the highest, man, there seems to be no evidence that behavior which could be called religious is always called forth in response to well-defined stimuli. Certainly there is a total absence of evidence of such activity even among the highest of animals. Is it found in all species? Now anger and fighting, for example, would meet such a test; but we would be reluctant to posit religion as a characteristic of all life. Again, is not specific religious behavior always learned? Certainly it does not appear *a priori,* i.e., prior to learning, an innate pre-formed pattern ready to burst forth at birth. Much has been said, too, of the test of universality. Is there not religion of some kind found among Eskimos and Hottentots alike? While a common-denominator thread might be found in the behavior of diverse ethnic groups of people, certainly the religious forms would have little if anything in common. Of course, to apply this test, we should have to take into account the fact that Leuba found forty-eight different ideas of what religion was, in his research on the subject. Obviously, a lot of confusion exists in finding agreement upon a definition of religion. Finally, the test of complete domination of the inherited native behavior would rarely be applied to religion. Fear may be so overwhelming as to possess completely a person. So may anger. So may fighting. But scarcely religion, except in those cases which we label abnormal. Certainly there are non-religious persons today — plenty of them — but never an angerless person, or a non-food-getting person, or a normal person who has no fight in him.

That there exists religious experience prior to learning is scarcely capable of proof. Indeed the theory of *a priori*

knowledge itself lacks substantial backing. Whatever support would seem to come from a study of defective human beings, there are records of statements of blind, deaf and dumb persons who declare they have wondered about the nature of the world before they had any perceptual knowledge, but such cases are rare and have not been satisfactorily authenticated. It would not need to be denied, however, in such cases, that curiosity did assert itself; but there still would be a block to be bridged to assert with evidence that such persons showed manifestations of a religious instinct.

The universality argument frequently has been used for making out a case for a religious instinct. After all, we are asked, are there not evidences of religious behavior from the Hottentots on up to the Eskimos? Mere universality, however, is not to be accepted as valid evidence. Smoking and the use of intoxicants are pretty nearly universal, but certainly not instinctive. Even behavior born of hereditary antecedents to birth, such as hypophrenosis or Huntington's chorea, would be neither universal nor confirmatory to ideas of behavior being universally determined.

The persistence-of-form argument holds that there is an unvariableness about instinctive behavior. Love, food getting, fighting may have varying forms of expression, but they always persist in an unadulterated form. Religious variations hardly stem back to any such purity of form. Note the varying definitions of religion found in the Leuba study forty years ago.

The overwhelming assertion of instinct sweeps aside all blocks in the long run. Food getting may be temporarily damned up but ultimately it asserts itself. Now religion would seem not to meet this test. When blocked, it disappears. Certainly there are many non-religious persons

on this earth. On the whole, then, the application of these tests to religious behavior scarcely would seem to make out a case for religion's being classified as an instinct.

The psychoanalysts would use another set of criteria for their conception of instincts. They would emphasize the drive concept — the drive for completeness, the drive of sex, the drive for satisfaction.

The drive concept of instincts furnishes us with only a little better case. At the start, one might say that the psychoanalytic conception itself has not by any means found wide whole-hearted acceptance. Processes here are conceived as effortful behavior aimed at overcoming stimuli; not as mere responses. The drive for self-preservation (although that term is rarely used today) amounts to a drive for well-being, comfortable living. Blocking here excites fear which will not fade until the drive by hook or crook attains a greater or lesser degree of satisfaction.

The sex drive, to be sure, is as old as man himself and although it may take many and varied forms, it is to be recognized as pervading a large segment of life's activities. The drive for mastery of objects and persons again is obvious. In all stages of development it is discernible. These drives are all unquenchable; they never fade out. Then, too, they may all have a variety of expression. Actually the drive, as it is conceived by its proponents, is not a specific reaction at all. It may be likened to the flowing of a river. Repression will slow it up, but it will find a place to drive on in spite of blocks.

Now religion may connect itself with the drive for wholeness. With God's aid the quest for the well-rounded personality may be achieved. Religion here and there does employ techniques to arrive at that end, e.g., acknowledgment of one's being a sinner and resorting to prayer, fast-

ing, or a host of ascetic practices to attain wholeness in what might be conceived as sainthood. Such techniques are far from being uniform, however. Again the sex drive is often connected with religion, as in the feeling of fatherhood, love, in the conceptions of rebirth, bride and bridegroom, terms found in the Bible. Finally, the drive for completion of living, or a happier state, is certainly not absent wholly in religious motivations. The concept of heaven itself has a connection here. Religion in the realm of spirit may make a beaten laborer a spiritual king.

The drive concept does seem to have some relevance to religion if it is to be accepted as a criterion of instinct. The weakest point in this consideration would seem to be that whereas there is evidence of the unconquerable nature of religion in mankind as a whole, in many individuals there is little evidence of even the glowing spark of religion. Certainly man has been born with a capacity for religion, but like Darwin's testimony regarding his absence of interest in poetry or art, it simply had died out because of non-experience.

Religion is related to the inner constitution and nature of man, but whether or not it shall manifest itself like instincts depends much upon what man does about it.

Now it is to be recognized that religion does have something in common with this theory, for although religion has apparently been stifled in some persons, religion has never been stamped out, even in a French or a Bolshevik Revolution. It has been noted time and again that although men may experience the obliteration of religion, mankind is incurably religious. Religion may die out in individuals if not exercised, like our response to a fine work of art or our desire to travel. It has even been pointed out that pronouncements of atheists themselves reflect religion

as in the case of the man who said, "Thank God, I'm an atheist."

Religion, too, has always been connected with the sex drive and the drive for comfortable living. One can at least point out that religion touches these two at many points. Religious behavior of a man cannot be traced directly to a drive which causes immediately that type of behavior; nevertheless, religion does have something in common with a drive theory of instinct.

Instinct, then, is a term rightly used for native behavior, whereas *instincts* are to be considered as definite or specific forms of native behavior. To be sure, man has instinct, but to quote Schoen again, "the problem of instincts is concerned with the state in which this native behavior exists: whether such differentiated acts as pugnacity, jealousy, envy, and other instincts are native behavior or acquired habits."

Before proceding with an answer to the question under consideration, we must go to our frame of reference previously discussed in Chapter II: What is religion? Religious acts, it must be remembered, are so labeled by arbitrary definition. Is contemplation prostrate before the Virgin Mary statue on Ash Wednesday a religious act? By arbitrary definition, considering all factors involved, yes; but in answer to this question, is the posture and contemplation of the worshiper native, i.e., inherited; then the answer must be no. And so with other behavior denominated religious: the acts of praying, singing hymns, sermonizing, giving, as well as the obviously abnormal religious acts, jumping, shouting, glossolalia, power states, seeing visions — all these are conditional responses and not native, *per se.*

The answer then can be drawn from the discussion above. It is neither yes nor no. With qualifications, it may be yes; with qualifications, it may be no. That there is an inherit-

ed substratum, however, upon which behavior called religious rests, cannot be denied. Mankind will wonder about the universe. It has always been so. The answer of the olden times led to a postulation of God. The answers today point to the presence of some superhuman power, not accident, which orders the universe according to law and which has revealed itself to contemplative souls from time immemorial. No one can read the writings of such men as Eddington, James, Whitehead, Thompson without feeling that beyond the scientific knowable, there is the master power which religiously contemplative souls call God.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS

Does everybody have a religious consciousness? It would logically be assumed that the religious man would have such. Now what does one mean by that? Primarily, it would imply that his thinking was directed to religious themes or that there was something in his consciousness, if religious, which impelled behavior to be termed religious. Since we tend so often to identify religion with right conduct, let us inquire into the nature of man's consciousness in as far as it might so relate itself.

In Chapter II, definitions of religion were discussed. Two of these relate to the question, Is there a reaching out on the part of man for a God in whom he can believe and about whom he can hold well-defined beliefs? The second has to do with the question of behavior. Is moral conduct dictated by man's mental constitution, be it either innate or the product of external forms operating and influencing it in the course of maturation?

Perhaps at this point it should be noted that long before Freud's day, the totality of mental life was recognized as being divided. Leibnitz is usually credited with originating the concept of the subconscious or the unconscious. As a philosophical concept, it gained credence and acceptance from von Hartman in his *Die Philosophie des Unbewussten.*

This concept was translated into psychology by F. W. H. Myers and his followers. Myers held that the real self is divided into the conscious self and the subliminal self,

which James called the fringe of consciousness. Thus I am conscious at the moment of some matter of business. That is central. On the threshold of consciousness, there are such vagaries which might supplant the central thought in the focus. Among these are feelings of the time of day, temperature, etc.; the sight of things surrounding; the feeling of body and clothes; the sense of personality.

The first question raises another question, that of the origin and nature of religion. A theory once held was that religion dates back to a divine revelation given to man and grasped by him. The fact that there is no evidence of such revelation in the case of many nations and tribes would tend to discount this theory in explaining the origin of religion. True, it is a factor in the history of some peoples, as, for example, the Jews.

Another theory used to explain the origin of religion is that it is generated by fear of an unknown power. Although rightly conceived religion is always predicated on a concept of a God or gods, the origin of religion has frequently been interlaced with superstition, magic, or fetishism. Just what that power might do to man if He were displeased was problematical. Man's crop might fail, his water supply become exhausted, famine might stalk the land, or what not. This power must then be propitiated.

Spenser had a somewhat different theory. He concluded that the origin of religion was to be found in ancestor worship. The sense of mystery, said he, we sense in the presence of the Unknowable Power. Wonder thus generated gives birth to worship. Schleiermacher found that a sense of dependence was the essence of religion, "the immediate consciousness of the universal existence of all finite things in and through the Infinite, and of all temporal things in and through the Eternal."

The second question to be answered here relates itself to conduct. What is right? What is wrong? How is a conclusion to be reached? The answer having the greatest historical sweep is that conscience is the resident faculty within, which tells man what is morally good in his own conduct. Now modern psychology immediately rises up and says it will have no part with the no-longer-accredited faculty psychology. Of course, etymologically, the word grows out of *co,* with, and *scio,* know. So conscience has its uppermost component, knowledge. Shakespeare so uses the word when he has Hamlet say, "thus conscience [consciousness] doth make cowards of us all." One could further break down conscience by saying that it has an intellectual component and an emotional one. The former reveals whether or not a piece of behavior would or would not conform to some external standard that has been set up. The latter gives the feeling that one ought approve or disapprove the idea.

There are other theories as to what makes an act or object right or wrong. One such theory is the hedonistic one. Does the act give pleasure? If so, it is good. If it gives pain, it is evil. A second theory is the test of moral intuition which holds that man has a sort of immediate apprehension of right and wrong, a kind of *a priori* thing. Still a third theory is the utilitarian test. Are the consequences acceptable? If so, the action is right. If not, the conduct is wrong.

There is perhaps another theory which differs from any of these. It is the relativistic test. Actions are not right or wrong in any absolute sense, but depend upon circumstances and relations to other things. Shakespeare came near to enforcing this theory when he said, "There's nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so." In contrast to this theory is the absolutist viewpoint. Right is

a thing determined by a power over and beyond man, a transcendental power, which reveals the matter to man via a miraculous revelation. This theory leaves little for man to do or think: He merely accepts or rejects it.

Finally there is the Martineau theory. This savors of relativism, but is more categorical. Briefly stated, Martineau holds that every action is right which in presence of a lower principle, follows a higher; every action is wrong which in the presence of a higher principle, follows a lower. Martineau has thirteen graduations of value on his scale. At the top he places veracity and reverence; at the bottom, vindictiveness, which is one assertive form of selfishness.

It may be concluded, then, that religion is rooted in consciousness in one way or other. That is to say, in as far as religion touches belief and behavior, it finds a relationship to man's conscious outlook.

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CHAPTER IX

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF TEMPTATION

The Genesis account of creation introduces a sinless man into the world. How man fell from such estate has been the subject of theological inquiry through the ages. The story of that early day projects a serpent onto the scene. The serpent presumably spoke Aramaic to Eve, who yielded to his entreaty. No greater classic explaining the functioning of temptation has ever been conceived or written.

The New Testament classic, the temptation of Jesus, parallels the Old Testament story in the principal psychological approaches. Here the instrument mentioned is the devil himself, but the technique is basically the same. (Satan, it may be said, became a familiar source of temptation to the Hebrew people only after the period of the exile. It is a matter of interest to note that the dualism of God and Satan warring against each other likely gained enforcement in the contact the Hebrews had with the Persians, where the dualism of Zoroaster found wide acceptance.)

Let us examine in some detail these classical temptations of Jesus from the standpoint of psychology. Jesus' account of his own temptation must have come only from Jesus himself since He was alone on the occasion. Bible scholars have pointed out time and again that the orientals are great employers of picture language. Jesus used it commonly in His parables. He seemingly used it here. Reference should be made to the occasion when he said to

Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Now of course Peter was not Satan, but the suggestion was ignoble and Jesus was labeling the idea evil. So in His temptation on the mount, He characterized the suggestions as being evil.

The three temptations were vitally related to conflicts which confronted Jesus. The one given first by Matthew had to do with how He was to announce His messiahship to the people. The easiest thing in the world would be to jump off the pinnacle of the temple while the crowd was surging in the Jerusalem streets. Coincidental with a great noise, they would look up and lo! there would be Jesus floating down as an angel, without wings, in defiance of the demands of gravity for a rapid crashing descent. Surely they would say, "This man is come from God," for the Master was reminded that in Psalm 91 was the promise that angels would protect Him, lest He dash His foot against a stone.

Easy? Yes! A short-cut route? Yes! Such announcement would beget followers who would see in Him a miracle worker, but Jesus did not want the reputation of being just a miracle worker. He wanted a spiritual allegiance based upon something deeper than the spectacular. In His healing ministry he healed man only as a result of a call upon Him or because of pressing need which aroused His compassion. He could not but reject this suggestion.

Again the temptation was suggested that if He would but compromise, He might gain followers more easily, and win even those who obstinately might refuse to make a complete surrender to Him. Why not give in a little at the beginning, be less hard, less exacting in His demands for discipleship? Why not make it a little easier for men to follow Him? It was the temptation to compromise. Making a concession at the beginning might make it possible to

establish His kingdom with less effort. Later perhaps He could, by His teaching, hew to the line more closely. How many leaders among His disciples through the centuries have yielded at this point? His answer was clear, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

A third temptation faced Him at His weak point. He had been without food for forty days. He had not noticed it so much until this moment. The fast was now ended. Then why should He not quickly, forthwith turn these stones into bread? Was it not His duty now to get sustenance in short order? Why not work a miracle for Himself?

He remembered that He came not to save Himself, but to save others, not to exert His power for self-ministration, but for the good of others. Power must not be used for selfish endeavors. His resistance on this occasion placed Him in a good position to resist when He hung on the cross. Again Satan taunted Him through another, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save." That was His mission — to save others, not Himself. He triumphed at the outset of His ministry by resisting the temptation when He was hungry — almost hungry enough to die. These temptations were moral victories, every one.

The story of the temptation of Eve is no less dramatic, except that it is the account of failure, of succumbing. Here the tempter first of all raises a doubt. Did not God say you should not eat of any tree of the garden? That is just another way of saying, how is it that God should be so selfish as to forbid your eating whatever you want? How can God be so unjust, unreasonable, unkind, cruel, as to deny you this innocent and good fruit?

When Eve replied she could eat other fruit — all except

this one, which carried the penalty of dying if she ate it Satan injected his rebuttal: "You shall not surely die." That statement awakened doubt. Eve here made the error of errors by discussing the matter, temporizing. Before, she had never doubted the wisdom and justice of God; now she wavered. Temptation always entails doubt. Maybe it will not be so bad; maybe it will not hurt. Rationalizing justifies.

A second psychological observation in connection with this temptation is that it entered through sense perception. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food . . . " First the suggestion to disobey God came through the auditory sense; now through visual sensation. The alcoholic who made it a point to pass the tavern on the other side of the street so he would not smell the liquor was acting in accordance with a sound psychological law, avoiding sense perception. Eve's temptation was intensified by association. Three suggestions gave power to the temptation: She "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise." Sin always presents itself as good. It is appealing not only because it is good, but because it has an aesthetic appeal also. It would also satisfy her thirst for knowledge by a short-cut route. People always are tempted to take short-cut routes. How often you see advertised, "A college course in two years"; "Become a missionary with eight weeks' training"; "Learn how to preach in eight easy lessons." Eve toyed with all the tempter's suggestions, and they appealed to her in spite of the categorical absolute proclaimed by God. Thinking over the ideas enhanced the desires and made less imperative the command of God. Temptation takes time to bewitch its victim. Sin is not entered upon pell

mell, but little by little the temptation weaves its spell. Only as the tempted draws upon counter resources, opens his mind to counter ideas, foresees destructive ends, and permits feelings of right and duty to prevail is temptation thwarted. A verse of scripture is apropos here, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted above the knowledge of God and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

Theologians have disputed for ages the question of inherited sin, Adamic nature. Upon superficial thought, the scholar would tend to discount this view as one of these irrational theological concepts. After all, is not the idea that through biological heredity sin is handed down to generations yet unborn just one of those unscientific assumptions? On the contrary, no biological or psychological assumption rests upon firmer ground. We are a part of our parents, our grandparents; biologically that is proved, the genes do hand things down to us. Now how about psychologically? Social heredity is just as strong a factor here as biological heredity. Outlooks and attitudes are determined by parental environment.

Is it not true, too, that the crude manifestation of instincts is evil? Take food-getting, sex, curiosity. The unbridled manifestation of these is boorish, uncivilized, we say. If we enter the theological field, we would call such behavior unrestrained, uncontrolled, sinful. So children, by nature, do manifest strong urges to act in an unacceptable manner, regardless of by what name one may call such conduct. The child begins to show perversity from the beginning. The germs of sin are there.

There remain further steps to be taken in considering the origin of temptation. Our uncurbed instincts, our evil habits, our unconscious longing for those things forbidden

by our moral sense explain the nature of temptation in large measure. Hadfield in his book *Psychology and Morals* points out that every temptation is *endopsychic*; i.e., it comes from within. No outside force is effective unless an opening is allowed within. External objects, tempting *per se,* some of them lose their force unless mental receptivity is present. We are the masters of our fate. Our own destiny is ours to control.

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CHAPTER X

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SIN

Sin is not a vernacular term, as far as vernacular use is concerned, but it is understood by the man of the street much better, for example, than such terms as sanctification and justification, which either are not understood or are misunderstood by the common man.

In erudite circles there has been substituted for the word sin such terms as social maladjustment or anti-social conduct; and the responsibility for such conduct is attributed to heredity, environment, temperament, or a variety of personality defects, or even insanity itself. Because the word sin does not sound nice in certain circles, these more acceptable words are used. In so doing, of course, there is lost something of the sting connoted by the word *sin*.

Now what is the essential nature of sin? There are at least three theories extant. One is that sin is sensuousness. Its genesis is to be accounted for on the basis of animal heredity. It is in our blood, so to speak. We are born in sin, i.e., its groundwork is a part of our inherited nature and constitution. The sins of the flesh might well be explained, it is claimed, on this hypothesis; hence the argument for Adamic nature in all of us. This theory connects itself with Manichean theory, which holds that matter is essentially an evil thing. Present day thinking, however, would regard matter *per se* as neither good nor evil.

Animal behavior in species below man can scarcely be

said to have ethical implications. It would be difficult to explain on this basis the sins of the disposition. Surely gossip, envy, pride, bitterness, snobbery, lying, and unkindness would be unexplainable on this basis. If this theory were the sole explanation of sin; then man's hope of overcoming sin would be hopeless, for no magic remedy has ever been found to cure the blood of such inclinations.

Another theory holds that sin finds explanation in the natural frailities of man, his finiteness. So sin here would be inevitable because of man's thoughtlessness, his ignorance, his inexperience. There is, of course, a grain of truth here as in the first theory. The objection to this theory lies in the fact that it would ally itself with a deterministic philosophy which savors of pantheism. According to this view, moral conduct would be impossible, for man is an automaton who really is not free to make choices. It would explain sin away, since man is not responsible for what he does.

A third theory is that sin is selfishness. Of the three, it is most plausible. Now selfishness is not an expression of self-love, but a perversion of it. It would ride roughshod over the rights of others wherever there is a conflict with selfish ends to be served. It has been said that it is the sin of sins because every sin in the category has an element of selfishness in it. It is the root of all sin. In religion, it amounts to substituting self for God.

How universally has man fallen a victim of sin? A religious man recently testified, "I thank God I have lived a perfect life for forty years. I've lived without commiting sin in all that time." Could it be that there were only six or eight sins in his list of sins, or maybe ten or twelve? Murder? To be sure, that was sin. He had not murdered

anybody. Thievery? To be sure that, too, was sin. He had not broken into the grocery store. But are there only six sins, or eight, or ten, or twelve, or twenty? A class recently voted the list below as sin, i.e., some members at least did. Some would not agree that all of these were sins, but the list merits contemplative thought, nevertheless. Here it is:

anger
personal frustration
worry
pride
slang
self-pity
covetousness
disloyalty
gossip
envy
jealousy
compromise of principles
bitterness
resentment
unforgiveness
greed
prejudice
negative criticism
impurity
unkindness
race prejudice
selfishness
political prejudice
petty thievery (value insignificant)
fighting
practicing birth control
white lies
fruitlessness
flattery
nagging
fretting
unconcern for others
indifference
snobbery
exclusiveness
backbiting
laziness
brooding
self-depreciation
superficiality
hasty judgment
use of tea, coffee, coca-cola, aspirin
use of tobacco, narcotics
undue physical strain
wrong use of money
lack of teamwork
substituting good for best
cowardice
unbelief
euthanasia
withholding of talents
neglect of religious duites
overeating
attending cinema
attending theaters
reading modern novels
social drinking
ignorance
playing rook or checkers
cards (gambling)
rationalizing
speaking piece of one's mind
buying war bonds
entering military service
entering non-combatant military service
betting small sums
matching pennies
taking a chance on an automobile
folk dancing
square dancing
social dancing
public bathing

It is now time we define sin. At the outset we must recognize there is no single definition. If we go to the Scriptures for light, we shall find at least three mutually exclusive definitions. These are employed in the Old Testament as three different words, and as three in the New Testament, to express the Biblical idea of sin. In the Old Testament, the word translated sin in Exodus XXXIV:7, *Chattath,* "expresses sin as missing one's aim. The etymology does not suggest a person against whom the sin is committed, and does not necessarily imply intentional wrongdoing. But the use of the word is not limited by its etymology and the sin may be against man (Genesis XL:1; 1 Samuel XXX:1) or against God (Exodus XXXII:33)" [1]

There is a parallel to this Hebrew word *Chattath* in the Greek word *harmatia* in the New Testament. The best translation here is that of missing the mark, and "may mean sin as a habit, a state, a power, and also a single act of sin." [2]

A second word used in the Old Testament for sin is *avon.* This word refers to quality of actions rather than an act, and thereby it acquires the sense of guilt. Guilt here may be described as the sinner's position with reference to God — a position which results from sin. Perhaps the best translation of this word into English is to be found in the word *wrong* which comes from *wrung. Avon, wrong,* is something out of proper shape, as clothes taken from the washing machine — something out of conformity to that which is right or straight.

A Greek equivalent found in the New Testament to this Hebrew word *avon* is *anomia;* which literally means law-

1. Hastings, **Dictionary of the Bible.**
2. **Ibid.**

lessness or anarchy. The conception of sin reflected in the Epistles of James and John grows out of this idea of sin. "Sin is lawlessness." (*anomia*) I John III:4.

Still a third conception of sin is given in the Old Testament Hebrew word *pesha* which means a "breaking away from a law or covenant, and thus implies a law and a lawgiver. It implies what *Chattath* does not necessarily imply, namely the voluntariness of sin." [3]

The third concept of sin occurs in the New Testament in the Greek word *parabasis,* which literally means transgressing and presupposes the existence of a law.

The three different scriptural meanings of sin, then, are missing the mark, a failure, i.e., falling short of the highest good and settling for some lower end; twisting or perverting character and conduct into a crooked thing; violating the law. These meanings all imply a standard or scale of values which should be conformed to and make sin consist in missing, perverting, or violating it. In short, sin is anything which is at variance with the divine character and attributes of God. Sin is essentially selfishness. Choose whatever sins you will, lying, stealing, vain ambition, envy, jealousy, vanity, and you will discover selfishness is the essence of them. The effect of selfishness is always to crowd God out of heart and life.

Conduct, then, must take into account the existence of the law itself, the intention of the person, and the consequences of the act. So a person may mean well and still do wrong. For conscience sake, men have slaughtered their enemies on the field of battle, burned heretics at the stake, stoned their prophets. Even if an act turns out to be virtuous, if impelled by an ignoble motive, the perpetrator could not be judged good.

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3. Ibid.

A final question may be asked here. Is there more or less sin now in the world? Is the world getting better or worse? Is the sense of sin declining? We have the Bible verse to the effect that evil doers shall grow worse and worse. They should, with the accumulation of traditional skills in wrong-doing, and with all of the added facilities which civilization has provided, be capable both of added good or added evil. That does not mean, however, that in certain areas the world is not better. It is. Less flagrant violations of law characterize the world today. Skid row everywhere is less filled with derelicts. One has but to read Evangeline Booth's account of the Bowery district of New York; then go there today to note the improvement. Today all of our cities are relatively safe; to walk down the streets of London after dark in the thirteenth century was to invite attack from men armed with clubs who prowled the streets.

In many respects the sense of sin has been mitigated. The conception of God has changed. Even in American colonial days, God was pictured as a being of wrath. Jonathan Edwards so pictures him in his famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." "The God that holds you over the pit of hell much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire; abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; His wrath towards you burns like fire; He looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire; He is of purer eyes than to bear you in His sight; you are ten thousand times as abominable in His eyes, as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in our eyes."

Today God is pictured as a God of love. Many have gone even to the opposite extreme and say He is too kind to punish at all. Extremes are usually distortions. The

Christian God of today is probably more acceptably featured as a God who loves, and because He loves, He sometimes punishes. "Behold, therefore, the goodness and the severity of God."

Hell, too, has lost its fire today. Nobody quite visualizes the pangs of conscience or the bitter memories as being the awful thing which a literal fire is. The fear of spiritual retribution is not as deterrent a force to keep one from sinning as a burning flame. This changed idea of hell makes sin to possess less fearful consequences.

Fear itself is on the wane. At least, there are a lot less things to fear today than in ancient times. Floods we control; fire we extinguish; lightning we protect ourselves against. Even old age has lost its fear in the United States, thanks to social security legislation. Fear of losing one's job likewise is safeguarded by unemployment insurance; and socialized medicine, yet around the corner, will take away the fear attending sickness and accident. Fear of banks failing is lessened, thanks to F.D.I.C. This decline of fear has carried over into an easing of the fear of sin.

The very fact that the word *sin* has been replaced in many circles is another evidence of its decline in our day. Explaining it as a wrong social adjustment born of a bad social order is common. Stealing on the part of the bank teller is to be blamed not on him, but on the low pittance he received as salary. Sin in slum areas is blamed on bad housing. Man simply sins because he never had a chance, and, therefore, not too much blame is to be attached to him as a sinner.

Today we live differently from our forebears. Then there was leisure time to think. In the case of inability to think constructive thoughts, man's mind easily turned to

brooding. Men's thoughts were turned inward. Self-examination led to self-criticism. Now we do not have time for such ruminations of the mind. We are objectively oriented. Sermons are no longer filled with subjective food, but with inspiration leading to action. Life is filled with attention-getting mediums which veer away from the subjective.

More and more, life is looked at in terms of the positive. Look at the subjects of sermons to be preached next Sunday in any metropolitan newspaper and note how little emphasis on negativism and subjectivism is there. The sermon subjects are suggestive of triumph, kingdom works, the mastery of life; a higher ethical sense has developed. What once was regarded as sin — sinful negatives to be shunned, like playing cards, going to the theater, dancing — receives little or no emphasis today. Instead, crookedness in high places, gouging the poor, deceit in politics, racial segregation, the use of armed force as an implement of peace have been attacked by a refined social conscience, born of the highest and noblest of Christian idealism. Business, politics, industry, and even the church are pursuing higher ethical practices than ever before.

Yet in spite of the abatement of the sense of sin, wrongdoing by whatever name we call it is still in the world. It is still a world that needs redeeming. Men still err and need cleansing of their motives, their ideals, their thoughts, their actions. As long as selfishness asserts itself, sin will abound.

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CHAPTER XI

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CONVERSION

Conversion is a word that should not be used alone. It needs an adjective before it. Its injection into all areas of life is to be admitted. In politics, one may be converted from adhering to the planks of the republican party to embracing those of the prohibition party. In economics, a conversion may occur from believing in a high protective tariff to an adherence to free trade. In government, one may switch from being a southern democrat to the New Deal philosophy. So on one may go in every field. The term itself simply denotes a turning from one state to another. Intellect and feeling are both involved in such a turnabout, but the latter may be more of a conspicuous factor.

A single illustration taken from the life of Carlyle may be cited here of a man's thorough conversion of outlook. He was a man of violent moods and fits and experienced many changes of emotional level. When he had finished the second volume of *The French Revolution,* he lent the manuscript to John Stuart Mill, who in turn lent it to another friend. This friend, after reading the absorbing story far into the night, left the manuscript on his study table, and the housemaid the next morning, hunting around for something to start the fire with, found the loose heap of paper; and so it went up in the flames, like the French Revolution itself. When the fatal news was told to Carlyle he was staggered by the heavy blow and sat

disconsolate in his despair for many days. One morning, while sitting by his open window brooding over his misfortune, he happened to see across acres of London roofs, a man working on a brick wall. Patiently the workman laid brick after brick, affectionately tapping each one with his trowel and all the while singing blithely as a lark.

> "And in my spleen," says Carlyle, "I said within myself, 'Poor fool, how canst thou be so merry under such a bile-spotted atmosphere as this, and everything rushing into the region of the inane?' And then I bethought me and said, 'Poor fool, thou, rather, that sittest here by the window whining and complaining!'" And he arose and washed his face and "felt his head anointed" and went to work, and presently *The French Revolution* was finished again. [1]

There is nothing, then, so mysterious about conversion. It is always a human thing, something man does as a result of the play of certain psychological forces. There is nothing religious or divine about it. Now let us put the adjective *religious* before the word *conversion*. Man's part must still be played, but God is conceived also as entering into the experience. In theology, God's part is called regeneration. This is the divine side of religious conversion.

A quotation from that famous classic in the field of religious conversion *Twice-Born Men* would be apropos here.

> A Salvation Army adjutant "had seen many of the lowest and most depraved people in London, but until she saw Old Born Drunk, never had she realized the hideousness and repulsive abomination to which vice

1. Snowden, **The Psychology of Religion,** pp. 144–145.

can degrade the human body. This man, the child of frightfully drunken parents, had been born in drink, and was almost certainly, as his name declared, actually born drunk. He had been taught to drink and had acquired an insatiable appetite for drink in earliest childhood. He was now, at the age of five- or six-and-forty, habitually drunk. The vileness of his clothing and the unhealthy appearance of his flesh did not strike the adjutant till afterwards. Her whole attention was held in a kind of horror by the aspect of the man's eyes. They were terrible with soullessness. She racks her brain in vain to find words to describe them. She returns again and again to the word stupefied. That is the word that least fails to mispresent what no language can describe. Stupefied! Not weakness, not feebleness; not cunning, not depravity; but stupor. They were the eyes of a man neither living nor dead; they were the eyes of nothing that had ever lived or could ever die — the eyes of eternal stillborn stupor. These eyes were hardly discernible, for the flaccid lids hung over the pupils, and the bagged flesh of the swollen white face pressed upon them from below. There was just a disk of glazed luminosity showing in each dwindled socket — a disk of veiling existence, perishing life, of stupor. For the rest he was a true Miserable, lower than anything to be found among barbarous nations, debased almost out of humanity. He was short, thick-set, misshapen, vile; clothed in rags which suffocated those who blundered near to him — a creature whom ragged children mocked with scorn as he passed down the street."

In a Salvation Army meeting he came forward and cried out, "Oh, I want to be like Joe!" — one of the

men who had testified. Afterwards he gave this account of what happened at that meeting: "While I was listening to Joe, thinking of what he's been, and seeing what he's become, all of a sudden it took me that I'd find God and get Him to make me like Joe. It took me like that. I just felt, all of a sudden, *determined* to find God. *Determined!*" he repeated, with energy astonishing in this broken and hopeless creature of alcoholism. "And while I was kneeling, while I was praying, I felt the spirit of God come upon me. I said, Oh, God, make me like Joe! and while I prayed, I felt the Spirit come upon me. I *knew* I could become like Joe. I know I am saved."

A life tested by fierce temptations cunningly devised by his old companions proved the reality and permanence of his conversion. This once ruined creature was now happy and whole. His conversion appeared so extraordinary to the people in the neighborhood, extraordinary in its lastingness as well as in its effects, that he became a power for righteousness without exerting any missionary zeal. People looked at him in the streets. Vicious and degraded men at street corners, or at doors of public-houses, regarded the old man, born again and living in respectability and happiness, with something of the same stirring in their brains as once had made him exclaim, "I want to be like Joe." He advertised salvation. [2]

From the human side religious conversion is basically a turning, a commitment of oneself to God. The word *repent* in the gospels is commonly given the overtone of penitence, or of being sorry for sins committed. Actually

2. Ibid., pp. 150–152.

the word *repent* comes from the Greek *metanoia* which carries no such idea. It rather means change of mind. A quotation here from Treadwell Walden's *The Great Meaning of Metanoia* will be in order. "*Nous* is the precise equivalent of 'mind.' *Meta* is a preposition which, when compounded with *nous,* means *after. Metanoia* is the after-mind: perception, knowledge, thought, feeling, disposition, will, *afterwards.* The mind has entered upon a new stage, upon something beyond." Mr. Walden quotes a correspondent as follows:

> The root of *meta* is the English "mid," and *meta* is at bottom the English "amid." From this idea (one of situation) it progresses to another idea of *direction;* and in this use it has the sense of "going right against," in the sense of "striking fair and square," or "right in the middle." Thus it gets the meaning of "oppositeness of direction," and its force in *metanoia* is to show that the action of the mind is now precisely in the opposite direction to what was before the case; . . . that spiritual perception of the right and the true which grows within and around a mind that is being gradually educated up to the divine standard; the nature wide open in front, not only looking behind, and receiving the whole counsel of God, not a part of it; every faculty enlightened, every feeling inspired; the entire man engaged; conviction, not excitement; earnestness, not impulse; habitude, not paroxysm; the heart tempered by the understanding, the understanding warmed by the heart; this, the consummate and yet attainable condition. . . . . This is not conveyed in the "Repent ye!" of our gospels, nor does it come within the range of much of the teaching which falls on the world's ear. The all-encompassing

> grandeur of an announcement which takes in the whole life, and calls upon man to enlarge his consciousness with the eternal and the spiritual, to live on the scale of another life, to let his character grow under this great knowledge, to let his conduct fall into the lines of the revealed divine will — all this is lost. [3]

It follows, then, that when John the Baptist, Jesus, and Peter preached "Repent . . . !" they were calling upon men to change their minds. That change, of course, implied an overwheming thing, a complete dissociation with the past and an embracing of the new. In the New Testament it meant a complete subsumption to Jesus and his way of life. Changing the mind, then, is man's first step so that God can do his act of divine regeneration, as the theologians would say. This act on man's part represents only the first stage in the conversion process.

In the Christian concept, the mind must next apprehend Christ as Savior. The term "apprehend" here is used in its etymological sense of seizing hold with the mind. This mental grasping is where what is known as faith comes in. Such faith is not blind credulity but a faith based on knowledge. That is the reason a famous evangelist will let no one accept Christ until the third night of the evangelistic meeting. He wants converts to know in whom they are to believe.

A third stage in the conversion process, as far as man is concerned, is obedience, the following of Jesus in the case of Christian conversion. Religious experience is tied up with obedience in the Christian concept of conversion. The second chapter of James points up the obedience phase: "So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

3. Walden, **The Great Meaning of Metanoia,** pp. 23–24.

Show me your faith apart from your works, and I, by my works, will show you my faith."

A question is often asked whether conversions are always sudden or sometimes gradual. To answer such a question, terms need defining. Was the apostle Paul's conversion sudden or gradual? It would seem the answer could be both. To be sure, it was sudden, i.e., the experience of God on the way to Damascus. The way for this cataclysmic experience had been paved; it was in the making for years.

There were both negative and positive factors entering into his conversion. Note first the negative ones. Paul had been slowly realizing that the law was inadequate. True, he says himself that in religious matters he went beyond those of his own age in showing zeal for the law. That fact in itself showed he was dissatisfied. The man who rides a hobby, preaches on some religious target with an ardent absoluteness, is usually trying to convince himself of the truth of the proposition which subconsciously he feels is slipping. So Paul's zeal in itself betrayed his own misgivings. He paints the picture in Romans VII. The law was defective in that it stirred up his evil desires, it pointed up his own hopelessness, and he realized there was no power in it.

On the positive side of Paul's conversion is his crisis experience on the way to Damascus. Paul probably had heard Jesus and knew His disciples. A positive step! He was present at the stoning of Stephen. Seeing him die in such a triumphant manner must have had a telling effect on Paul. In contrast, Stephen must have impressed him as having that for which he himself had been seeking.

It is to be granted, however, that commitment to Christ is a definite act somewhere along the line. One does

not experience conversion in his sleep or in a trance. In every such experience there is a point at which one commits himself to Christ. One does not just grow into discipleship. It has a genesis somewhere.

The age of converts to Christ has been the subject of a number of studies. Starbuck made a study of conversion ages of almost 800 conversions. Subsequent studies show little deviation from his finding of over 50 years ago. In that study he found that most conversions occurred between the ages of ten and twenty-five, placing it, therefore, as an adolescent phenomenon in the main. He found that conversions occur in a few people as early as age seven, increase gradually in number until the ages of ten or eleven, then rapidly to sixteen. From then on, a decline is shown until the age of twenty, after which the fall continues until age thirty, after which conversions are exceedingly rare. Among males, the study showed the greatest number around the age of seventeen; among females, conversion occurred most frequently at thirteen and sixteen. Starbuck concluded that "conversion and puberty tend to supplement each other in time rather than to coincide; but they may nevertheless be mutually conditioned." Several other investigations have found that conversions begin with the years at which there is a sudden increment of children's reasoning powers. In Appendix A there appears the results of a study recently carried out on reconversions.

One of the most interesting psychological studies in the matter of conversion is the means or vehicle employed in bringing about the changed state. The protracted meeting or revival is the method of mass evangelism. The term revival has gone out of style today for several reasons. In the first place, it implies an indictment of the group. They need reviving. Perhaps that condition exists with reference

to some in the congregation and with reference to some congregations, but the psychological connotation still reflects on the group. The term evangelistic meeting is, from this point of view, more acceptable. The term preaching mission is coming to be more used and acceptable.

The best exemplification, perhaps, of mass evangelism, is to be found in the camp meeting. Camp meetings in this country began south of the Mason and Dixon line just before the turn of the nineteenth century. McMaster, in his book *History of the People of the United States* graphically describes the phenomenon in the following paragraphs:

> One of the brothers was irresistibly impelled to speak. . . . The words which then fell from his lips roused the people before him "to a pungent sense of sin." Again and again the woman shouted, and would not be silent. He started to go to her. The crowd begged him to turn back. Something within him urged him on, and he went through the house, shouting and exhorting and praising God. In a moment the floor, to use his own words, "was covered with the slain." Their cries for mercy were terrible to hear. Some found forgiveness, but many went away "spiritually wounded" and suffering unutterable agony of soul. Nothing could allay the excitement. Every settlement along the Green River and the Cumberland was full of religious fervor. Men fitted their wagons with beds and provisions, and travelled fifty miles to camp upon the ground and hear him preach. The idea was new; hundreds adopted it, and camp-meetings began.
>
> At no time was the "falling exercise" so prevalent

as at night. Nothing was then wanting that could strike terror into minds weak, timid, and harassed. The red glare of the camp-fires reflected from hundreds of tents and wagons; the dense blackness of the flickering shadows, the darkness of the surrounding forest, made still more terrible by the groans and screams of the spiritually wounded, who had fled to it for comfort; the entreaty of the preachers; the sobs and shrieks of the downcast still walking through the dark valley of the Shadow of Death; the shouts and songs of praise of the happy ones who had crossed the Delectable Mountains, had gone on through the fogs of the Enchanted Ground, and entered the Land of Beulah, were too much for those over whose minds and bodies lively imaginations held full sway. The heart swelled, the nerves gave way, the hands and feet grew cold, and, motionless and speechless, they fell headlong to the ground. In a moment crowds gathered about them to pray and shout. Some lay still as death. Some passed through frightful twitchings of face and limb. At Cabin Creek, so many fell that, lest the multitude should tread on them, they were carried to the meeting-house and laid in rows on the floor. At Cane Ridge, the number was three thousand.

The excitement surpassed anything that had been known. Men who came to scoff remained to preach. All day and all night the crowd swarmed to and fro from preacher to preacher, singing, shouting, laughing, now rushing off to listen to some new exhorter who had climbed upon a stump, now gathering around some unfortunate who, in their peculiar language, was "spiritually slain." Soon men and women fell in such numbers that it became impossible to move about without trampling them, and they were hurried to the meeting-house.

At no time was the floor less than half covered. Some lay quiet, unable to move or speak. Some talked, but could not move. Some beat the floor with their heels. Some, shrieking in agony, bounded about, it is said, like a live fish out of water. Many lay down and rolled over and over for hours at a time. Others rushed wildly over the stumps and benches, and then plunged, shouting "Lost! Lost!" into the forest.

As the meetings grew more and more frequent, this nervous excitement assumed new and more terrible forms. One was known as jerking; another, as the barking exercise; a third, as the Holy Laugh. "The jerks" began in the head and spread rapidly to the feet. The head would be thrown from side to side so swiftly that the features would be blotted out and the hair made to snap. When the body was affected, the sufferer was hurled over hindrances that came in his way, and finally dashed on the ground to bounce about like a ball. At camp-meetings in the far South, saplings were cut off breast-high and left "for the people to jerk by." One who visited such a camp-ground declares that about the roots of from fifty to one hundred saplings the earth was kicked up "as by a horse stamping flies."

From the nerves and muscles the disorder passed to the mind. Men dreamed dreams and saw visions, nay, fancied themselves dogs, went down on all fours, and barked till they were hoarse. It was no uncommon sight to behold numbers of them gathered about a tree, barking, yelping, "treeing the devil." Two years later, when much of the excitement of the great revival had gone down, falling and jerking gave way to hysterics. During the most earnest preaching and exhorting, even sincere professors of religion would, on a sudden, burst

into loud laughter; others, unable to resist, would follow, and soon the assembled multitude would join in. This was the "Holy Laugh," and became, after 1803, a recognized part of worship. [4]

An assessment of the debits and credits of revivalism might well be made. First, let us consider the debit side. Revivalism follows all of the laws of social psychology. A crowd gathered together for a common purpose tends to take on an identity different from that of any of its component numbers. There must be a fixation of attention, a point of orientation, an atmosphere of expectancy coupled with some excitement born of a sense of mystery. One example chosen outside the area of religion will illustrate what may happen. The account is taken from a newspaper report of a Paderewski matinee, quoted by Sidis in his book *The Psychology of Suggestion*:

> There is a chatter, a rustling of programmes, a waving of fans, a nodding of feathers, a general air of expectancy, and the lights are lowered. A hush. All eyes are turned to a small door leading on to the stage; it is opened. Paderewski enters. . . . A storm of applause greets him, . . . but after it comes a tremulous hush and a prolonged sigh, . . . created by the long, deep inhalation of upward of three thousand women. . . . Paderewski is at the piano. . . . Thousands of eyes watch every common-place movement (of his) through opera-glasses with an intensity painful to observe. He the idol, they the idolaters. . . . Toward the end of the performance the most decorous women seem to abandon them-

4. McMaster, **History of the People of the United States, II**, pp. 578–582.

selves to the influence. . . . There are sighs, sobs, the tight clinching of the palms, the bowing of the head. Fervid exclamations: "He is my master!" are heard in the feminine mob.

How completely the individual succumbs to the crowd mind is illustrated by Sidis again in the same book in which he cites an incident growing out of a riot among the military colonists in Russia in 1831.

While Sokolov was fighting hard for his life, I saw a corporal lying on the piazza and crying bitterly. On my question, "Why do you cry?" he pointed in the direction of the mob and exclaimed, "Oh, they do not kill a commander, but a father!" I told him that instead of it he should rather go to Sokolov's aid. He rose at once and ran to the help of his commander. A little later when I came with a few soldiers to Sokolov's help, I found the same corporal striking Sokolov with a club. "Wretch, what are you doing? Have you not told me he was to you like a father?" To which he answered, "It is such a time, your honor; all the people strike him; why should I keep quiet?"

In religion a case may be referred to from Davenport's *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*: "He had had no religious experience and at that time did not wish any. The crowd was laboring under great religious excitement, and reflex phenomena were abundantly in evidence. Suddenly my friend found himself with his hands pressed against his lungs, shouting, 'Hallelujah!' at the top of his voice."

Continuing a consideration of the debit side of revivalism, it is to be observed that where a professional evan-

gelist is employed, there is a tendency to ignore existing social institutions and congregational backgrounds, and play on emotional excitement. Success is too often equated in terms of responses and noses counted. Preaching is therefore calculated to get tangible results; hence, tricks too often are employed to that end. Responses born of uncritical thinking are therefore apt to be superficial and casualties run high. The appeal to come is often overplayed while solid beliefs are glossed over.

In this connection, a United Press story of a recent revival in a college shows how completely reflective thinking was imprisoned and emotions allowed to ride rampant.

> A spontaneous outburst of religious fervor gripped the student body yesterday and was continuing after more than 20 hours of an amazing marathon of demonstrations of faith.
>
> All classes were suspended at the theological training school as 1,500 men and women students jammed the chapel to espouse their faith.
>
> The demonstration began during a routine religious service Wednesday night as part of the nonsectarian college's "evangelistic week."
>
> The president of the college rose to ask if there was anyone who would "like to give a word of testimony or praise on the blessings of this week?"
>
> Ten students arose immediately and began pouring out their faith. Others rose and the hours passed as the testimonials continued. All night long the demonstration went on. Yesterday more and more students packed into the chapel until all standing room was gone and the crowd overflowed into the balcony and an auxiliary chapel in the basement.

Amazed school officials said that "we will let it run its course."

One of the first students to rise was the co-captain of the basketball team, who said he "wanted to get things right with God." A girl student told how she had been "afraid and ashamed of the Lord, but praise God, I am not now." Another girl confessed that she had cheated on an examination. A youth said he felt resentment against several of his teachers and asked their forgiveness. . . .

A spokesman said the service had evolved into a mass confession of wrongdoing, false pride and other defections. . . . An evangelist had been scheduled to speak at the service which began at 7 p.m. Wednesday night. But he still had not delivered his sermon late yesterday.

"I can be heard any time; let this demonstration go on," . . . [he] said.

The school dining hall was kept open and students drifted in and out of the chapel to eat. Some went home temporarily to get some sleep. A few tried to go to classes but there were not enough students or faculty members on hand and the classrooms were forgotten.

At about 3 a.m. during the night . . . students who wished to be heard were asked to come to the platform. About 150 surged from their seats in response, and the tumult went on. By morning additional hundreds of students had crowded into the chapel and they had to be divided into individual groups to be heard.

The dean of students said he thought "this display of Christian faith indicates a hunger for a deeper life."

One may sum up the debit side by saying that many revivals are superficial, abound in undue emotionalism, pre-

sent material uncritically, are characterized by shallow preaching, are given over to excesses. Many growing churches have ruled out revivals as means of making converts.

On the credit side it is to be recognized in mass evangelism that some persons are converted thereby. In spite of the repeaters who always respond and who must be numbered among the unstable element, it often happens that new people are reached who have not been Christians before. It was said of a meeting held some years ago that only two persons were left who responded in the meeting but that they were worth the $1200 cost of the meeting.

The psychololgy of public confession is an important step to take for a person who is considering committing his life to Christ. The mourners' bench or altar is commonly used by some evangelistic churches today as a means to the end. The very fact that such technique is synonymous with a confession of Christ gives it an important status as a vehicle, but labeling such procedure as "old fashioned" implies that it is Biblical, whereas it is not. The altar so used is of comparatively recent origin. Jesus himself used no such device to get followers. He simply said, "Follow me," and "he followed Him." Simple in the extreme, to be sure.

The unhappy condition in which many sincere seekers after the better life find themselves is that they become enmeshed in a pattern born of a mass evangelism hysteria situation in which it is demanded of them to "come to the altar." This emphasis has often done injustice to many honest penitents when they are gripped by the delusion that the only *modus operandi* for conversion is the public altar. The author has no thought of being overcritical of the altar technique, and certainly he would not

wish to lessen the emphasis on evangelism, but he believes there are other techniques to be employed as evangelistic methods which in many instances are better.

To many persons it is bewildering to seek God in a situation where many people are gathered around, often several of them praying aloud in a hubbub of confusion. No wonder, then, that many spiritual leaders frown severely on the exclusive monopoly claimed by some for this method, which is pictured as the *sine quo non* of the conversion process. An equivalent to this method is sometimes employed in what is known as the Inquiry Room, where a person after the service may counsel and pray with one or two others. This would seem to have distinct advantages over the altar method.

A danger, of course, is to be recognized in any such public confession: Unfortunately, meetings are often judged as being successes or failures by the number who come forward. Undue persuasion is therefore often resorted to in order to make the count larger. A study was recently made of the reports given by ten congregations of the enlistments obtained in revival meetings in a given year. The figures added up to about a thousand accessions, whereas the combined membership of those congregations a year after was given as being only a little over 800. High casualties, those!

A study was made some years ago by one of my students as to why there was a decline in revivalism in this country. Nine leading evangelists entered into the correspondence. The results are contained in Appendix B.

In many churches today, revival meetings have been replaced by the emphasis upon personal evangelism or every member evangelism. The success of this project is in direct proportion to the interest and feeling of com-

punction of church members. In one sect today, every member is considered a preacher or evangelist. That is getting back to the conception of the early church and, if adequately entered into, has many advantages over the old revival meeting. The fine results obtained by the "every member a soul winner" effort is noteworthy. Its success is conditioned by the motivation and training to which the church member is exposed. It is the harder way, but the more rewarding one in the long run.

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CHAPTER XII

ABNORMAL RELIGIOUS PHENOMENA

Negative Mysticism

There are as many definitions of mysticism as there are of religion. There is no typical mystical state, for such states vary tremendously. At the risk of being arbitrary, let us at the beginning realize that all religion contains a mystical element. There is that in all religion which is elusive, which will not yield to test-tube analysis or be perceived by our empirical senses. With that said it would be incorrect to conceive religion wholly in terms of mystical experience.

Hasty and superficial judgment has caused some to label almost every religious soul a mystic. Jesus has been called a mystic, as has St. Paul. In no absolute sense would either wear the shoe. Mysticism like many other mental phenomena is best described by the oblique line. At one end is little mysticism; at the other end, much. Few persons can be statically placed at either extreme. Thoroughgoing mysticism is little in evidence in protestantism; spotty here and there in Roman Catholicism; much more in evidence in certain areas of oriental religion.

A thoroughgoing mystic lives in another world. Mundane things of this earth concern him little. Practical considerations are by and large beyond his horizon. He is other-worldly. Practically, logically, and consistently, mysticism leads to a number of abnormal religious phe-

nomena which we shall discuss later. Extreme mysticism is subjective religion. Philosophically, it tends to identify itself with pantheism.

The practical soul, on the other hand, who is absorbed in the matter of making a living, of social case work, of political housecleaning, of industrial planning, and the hundred other immediate interests and pursuits incidental to living, scarcely finds either time or place for any appreciable amount of mysticism in his schedule.

One can best get the taste of mysticism by inquiring into the writings of the mystics themselves. St. Theresa, writing in *Interior Castle,* distinguishes five stages of mysticism which she points up. First there is the *prayer of quiet.* She describes this stage as follows:

> In the prayer of quiet, when the water flows from the spring itself and not through conduits, the mind ceases to act; it is forced to do so, although it does not understand what is happening, and so wanders hither and thither in bewilderment, finding no place for rest. Meanwhile the will, entirely united to God, is much disturbed by the tumult of the thoughts: no notice, however, should be taken of them, or they would cause a loss of a great part of the favour the soul is enjoying. Let the spirit ignore these distractions and abandon itself in the arms of divine love.

The next stage she calls the *prayer of union*:

> In the prayer of union the soul is asleep, fast asleep, as regards the world and itself: in fact, during the short time this state lasts it is deprived of all feeling whatever, being unable to think on any subject, even if it wished. No effort is needed here to suspend the thoughts: if the

soul can love — it knows not how, nor whom it loves, nor what it desires. In fact, it has died to this world, to live more truly than ever in God.

A third stage she identifies as *ecstasy*:

> . . . when He intends ravishing the soul He takes away the power of speech, and although occasionally the other faculties are retained rather longer, no word can be uttered. Sometimes the person is at once deprived of all the senses, the hands and body becoming as cold as if the soul had fled; occasionally no breathing can be detected. This condition lasts but a short while; I mean in the same degree, for when this profound suspension diminishes the body seems to come to itself and gain strength to return again to this *death* which gives more vigorous *life* to the soul. This supreme state of ecstasy never lasts long, but although it ceases, it leaves the will so inebriated, and the mind so transported out of itself that for a day, or sometimes for several days, such a person is incapable of attending to anything but what excites the will to the love of God.

A fourth she calls *Spiritual Marriage,* about which she says:

> By some mysterious manifestation of the truth, the three Persons of the most Blessed Trinity reveal themselves, preceded by an illumination which shines on the spirit like a most dazzling cloud of light. The three Persons are distinct from one another; a sublime knowledge is infused into the soul, imbuing it with a certainty of the truth that the Three are of one substance, power, and knowledge and are one God. Thus that which we hold as a doctrine of faith, the soul now, so

to speak, understands by sight, though it beholds the Blessed Trinity neither by the eyes of the body nor of the soul, this being no imaginary vision.

There is reason to believe that mysticism has the right to the claim of being a unique religious experience, not to be identified with such well-known psychological phenomena as extreme introversion or hysteria. In the extreme form of each of these three there are common elements, to be sure, such as dissociation of personality. But some mystics show symptoms of extroversion, too, as for example St. Catherine in her hospital work at Genoa. What evaluation is given mysticism depends on the prejudices and orthodoxy of the judge. From a hard, practical standpoint, the mystic has bad mental health; from the religious viewpoint, he is coming at one with God whom he loves by an overwhelmingly subjective worship, "loving God and keeping His commandments which is the whole duty of man."

Ecstasy

Ecstasy is often a stage in the mystical experience, but it may and does sometimes show itself as a phenomenon independent of other marks of mysticism. The history of civilization could not be written without giving it its due, for it has been a factor in the genesis of religion; it has sullied and exalted religious behavior; it has given inspiration for the winning of war; it has triumphed over death itself.

Here again, it must be recognized, there are stages of intensity in ecstatic states. Usually we think of it as characterized by extreme emotional excitement and an extreme concentration of attention which makes man oblivi-

ous to normal sense perception and self-control. Its manifestation may veer between joy and a form of degrading mania, or between extreme body motility and rigidity. Such states may seemingly resemble hypnosis or catalepsy, but after the extreme ecstatic experience has passed, the subject is able to recall; hence, consciousness was present.

The rule in ecstatic experience is that whether the form taken is intense emotional excitement, a vision, or a hallucination, the subject matter is pleasing affectively. Like St. Paul, an ecstatic seizure may make one feel that he is "out of the body." A quotation from Madame Guyon is illustrative here:

> We all of us came near perishing in a river which we found it necessary to pass. The carriage sank in the quicksand. Others who were with us threw themselves out in excessive fright. But I found my thoughts so much taken up with God that I had no distinct sense of danger. It is true that the thought of being drowned passed across my mind, but it caused no other sensation or reflection in me than this — that I felt quite contented and willing it were so, if it were my heavenly Father's choice.

James quotes a Huguenot woman persecuted at the time of Louis XIV as saying,

> They shut all the doors and I saw six women, each with a bunch of willow rods as thick as the hand could hold, and a yard long. He gave me the order, "Undress yourself," which I did. He said, "You are leaving on your shift; you must take it off." They had so little patience that they took it off themselves, and I

was naked from the waist up. They brought a cord with which they tied me to a beam in the kitchen. They drew the cord tight with all their strength and asked me, "Does it hurt you?" and then they discharged their fury upon me, exclaiming as they struck me, "Pray now to your God." It was the Roulette woman who held this language. But at this moment I received the greatest consolation that I can ever receive in my life, since I had the honor of being whipped for the name of Christ, and in addition of being crowned with his mercy and his consolations. Why can I not write down the inconceivable influences, consolations, and peace which I felt interiorly? To understand them one must have passed by the same trial; they were so great that I was ravished, for there where afflictions abound, grace is given superabundantly. In vain the woman cried, "We must double our blows; she does not feel them, for she neither speaks nor cries." And how should I have cried, since I was swooning with happiness within?

Stephen the martyr is described, when being stoned, as his face shining "like that of an angel." Rogers being burned at the stake is described as bathing his hands in the flame as though it were cold water, and Lawrence, in supreme ecstasy, was laid upon the gridiron and with a smile, said, "Turn me, I am roasted on one side," and died without a whimper of pain.

A most interesting ecstatic catalepsy case of a religious girl is described by Tuckey as follows:

Dr. Brown-Sequard relates a remarkable case of ecstatic catalepsy in a girl whom he called in to see.

She lived in Paris, close to the Church of St. Sulpice, and every Sunday morning at eight o'clock, when the bell began to ring, she used at once to rise from her bed, mount the edge of the bedstead, and stand there on tip-toe until the bell sounded at eight in the evening, when she returned to her bed. The board on which she stood was curved and polished, and it would have been impossible for the most athletic man to have remained on it in such a position for more than a few minutes at a time. While standing there, she was utterly unconscious of her surroundings, and continued murmuring prayers to the Virgin all the time, her hands clasped, her eyes fixed, and head slightly bent. Some of the bystanders were skeptical, and Dr. Brown-Sequard, to put her to the test, applied a strong, interrupted current to her face. She showed no signs of pain; but the muscles reacted energetically, and her intonation was therefore slightly affected. The girl was weak and anemic, and was so thoroughly exhausted by her Sunday exertions, that the remainder of the week she could only lie helpless in her bed.

One writer, Ribot, holds that ecstasy consists of two principal factors: first, the restriction of the area of consciousness to one intense idea, and second, the emotional state of rapture which is described as a form of love in its highest degree, carrying with it the pleasure of possession. Freud would add another factor, viz., the operation of the subconscious. Whether ecstasy is wholesome or unwholesome depends on the use to which it is put, i.e., the test of its effect on all concerned including the subject himself. While not ignoring or negating the expression as God-given, for most of us, God's revelation of himself to

us comes through our higher faculties as we comprehend that revelation through Jesus.

Glossolalia

A sister state of ecstasy is glossolalia, or speaking in tongues. At the outset it should be noted that apparently in the New Testament two kinds of tongues are cited. The one referred to in the second chapter of *The Acts*: On this occasion the illiterate Galileans "began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance" and the men present on this day of Pentecost ". . . from every nation . . . were bewildered because each one heard them speaking in his own language [i.e., dialect]." The whole occasion is pictured in the chapter as a supernatural one; for, after they had gathered together, "suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." The picture painted is undeniably presented as a miracle, and those who accept miracles at all would have no trouble accepting this one.

Now in the Corinthian church the setting is entirely different. Here some of the members likely had passed through long periods of prayer and contemplation. At the end of such a span of worship it was not strange to find such persons crying out to God in a tongue which they themselves did not understand. In other words, the manifestation of tongues in the Corinthian church was a natural outgrowth of coming at one with God and in essence a rapt, ecstatic utterance, the value of which lay in self-edification.

St. Paul has been called by some a mystic. He was not. True, he had touches of mysticism in his experience, but a thoroughgoing mystic he was not. Above all he was

a practical man, realistic as well as idealistic. He saw that several things carried on in the Corinthian church were hurting its influence. "If therefore the whole church assembles, and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad? . . . Let all things be done for edification. If any speak in a tongue, . . . let one interpret. . . . For God is not a God of confusion, but of peace."

Devout men often fall into the same pitfalls today as did those in the Corinthian church. Glossolalia cropped out among the Franciscans of the thirteenth century. About 1830, among the Scotch people, it was in evidence. Among the early Mormons it was practiced. It has at times been found among certain Quaker churches and Methodists. Many sects at the turn of the present century have practiced it, and it revived recently in Sweden.

Stigmatization

There are records of Christians marking themselves with the cross on the hands or arms, or with the name of Christ. Nuns in medieval times marked themselves as a means of protection. Martyrs were branded on their foreheads by their persecutors at times. The term stigmatization does not refer usually to such cases at all, but rather to marks which appear spontaneously. Whether St. Paul refers to stigmatization of his own body is a moot question.

The first generally recognized classical case of stigmatization goes back to St. Francis of Assisi, Italy. He fell ill after living a non-religious life for twenty years. The illness did something to him. Once recovered, he forsook the old life, took himself to a grotto outside the city,

and became an ascetic, practicing rigid penance and concentrating on the suffering of Christ. Seven others joined him, and in 1208 the Franciscan Order for Monks was founded.

In 1224, on Monte Alverno, he believed he saw the Lord in the form of a seraph and in such position that he appeared to be hanging on the cross. Some of his contemporaries testify that following his prayer of ecstasy on this occasion, the nail marks of Christ appeared on his hands and feet and in his side. Some say the side wound would bleed upon occasion. Competent witnesses corroborate the presence of the wound or scars both before and after his death, which occurred two years later.

St. Catherine of Siena presents the second classical case of stigmatization. Born over a hundred years later, she practiced extreme ascetism, fasting, self-flagellation. For a while she is believed to have slept only fifteen minutes out of each twenty-four hours. In a trance at the age of twenty-three, she enacted the crucifixion, and upon coming out, declared she had the stigmata brought about by the light emanating from Christ's wounds to corresponding spots on her body.

After this time, stigmatization occurred often, but for some time it was confined to the two orders of monks, the Franciscans and the Dominicans, between whom an intense rivalry existed. Catherine was a Dominican; Francis, the founder of the Franciscans. Most frequently the stigmatization occurred on Good Friday after the abstentions of Lent. Psychology accepts this phenomenon as a likely one after certain suggestion techniques have been followed. Under hypnosis it has been done. Under strong emotional excitement, blood is believed to be transudated through the perspiratory ducts, according to W. B. Car-

penter. Physiologically, it has been described as an exaggerated blush.

Women seem to be more susceptible to stigmatization than men. In the Louise Lateau case already referred to, it is said she lost seven-eighths of a quart of blood on each occasion. First, in 1868, she was believed dying. Upon receiving the sacrament, she rapidly recovered. In eight days the stigmata appeared on her side. The following Friday, the marks appeared on her feet; one week later, blood oozed from the back and palm of her hands. Four months later the marks appeared on her forehead to correspond to the thorns Christ wore. This continued four years. She died at the age of thirty-three. Frequently now, especially on Good Friday, claims of stigmatization are made by Roman Catholic adherents.

Visions

In the first verse of the Hebrew letter is a significant passage, "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers, . . . but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son." Historically, the Old Testament contains a fair amount of visions. It is often used in the sense of revelation from God. The early church felt some influence of visions, but in the mediaeval church, they were common. Today, although not unknown, they are usually regarded with some incredulity, most religious folks of a Christian persuasion preferring to interpret the will of the Lord from the applications of the teachings of Jesus.

A quotation from one of the well-known mystics who saw visions, St. Theresa, follows:

> Like imperfect sleep, which, instead of giving more strength to the head, doth but leave it the more ex-

> hausted, the result of mere operations of the imagination is but to weaken the soul. Instead of nourishment and energy she reaps only lassitude and disgust; whereas a genuine heavenly vision yields to her a harvest of ineffable spiritual riches and an admirable renewal of bodily strength. I alleged these reasons to those who so often accused my visions of being the work of the enemy of mankind and the sport of my imagination. . . . I shewed them the jewels which the divine hand had left with me: — they were my actual dispositions. All those who knew me saw that I was changed; my confessor bore witness to the fact; this improvement, palpable in all respects, far from being hidden, was brilliantly evident to all men. As for myself, it was impossible to believe that if the demon was its author, he could have used, in order to lose me and lead me to hell, an expedient so contrary to his own interests as that of uprooting my vices, and filling me with masculine courage and other virtues instead, for I saw clearly that a single one of these visions was enough to enrich me with all that wealth.

One of the visions often referred to in church history is that of Constantine who, in his struggle with Maxentius, declared he witnessed at high noon the vision of a flaming cross in the sky on which was written, "By this sign, conquer." In the early church and in the mediaeval church, visions occurred at every turn of the road. The hermits and monks accepted them as a matter of course. One of the most famous of the historical visions of the period was that claimed by Joan of Arc, who, at the age of twelve, heard voices which commanded her to free the French from English domination and put the French

dauphin on the throne of France. The founders of religious sects commonly had them, as for example, Joseph Smith and William Miller.

The psychologist is forever trying to explain but never trying to explain away. He, as a true scientist, would never categorically negate any supernatural manifestation, but he is aware that visions are easily thrown on the screen when hallucinations leap upon the scene. Now hallucinations are produced in two ways. They may be gross exaggerations of a stimulus or they may be projected out of a clear sky, newly created presentations. The wish of the subject is a powerful influence, both in creating and in giving form to the perception. The imagination is given free rein in such cases. One needs only to close the eyes and concentrate upon a fact or gaze into the crystal ball and, with or without the religious motive, hallucinatory visions will appear.

Dreams

Dreams have been described as sleeping visions. Theories on dreams range from that one which holds that a dream is a reliable vehicle for relaying a message from the spirit world to man, to that which holds a dream to be a reaction from overeating. Dreams certainly have no stock interpretation, i.e., dreaming of falling relates itself to one thing for Smith, while the same type of dream relates itself to quite another thing for Jones. No concept has an unvarying meaning. Rather, it is to be assumed that the subject matter of a dream relates itself to the life and experiences of the one who does the dreaming.

Perhaps the most talked-of theory of dreams in years has been the Freudian theory. Freud held dreams, most often symbolic, were expressions of the EGO, which is

allowed free play when we are unconscious and the censor is not at work. The censor during our waking hours holds in check the distasteful tendencies. In sleep the stifled wish gains ascendency over the censor. Dreams, then, are ungratified wishes of the subject often symbolically expressed, it is true. Dreams really reflect the mental life of the dreamer.

Historically, dreams have played a large part in religious history. Because of a dream, Patrick became an apostle to the Irish. Dreams influenced the conversion of such men as John Bunyan. Dreams will always have a religious connotation, for many still dream of being cast into hell, of being thrown out of Heaven.

Witchcraft

The difference between witchcraft and demoniacal possession lies in the fact that in the former the person was believed to be in a league with the devil; in the latter, the demon was believed to enter into the body of the unfortunate one and control his thinking and conduct. Two hundred years ago the belief in witchcraft was pretty firmly imbedded in the thinking of religious folk. As late as 1889, a woman was burned in Russia for being a witch. In Georgia in 1890, a woman was believed to have bewitched a man, while in Pennsylvania even as late as 1950, witchcraft was believed by some to have been practiced. Martin Luther and John Wesley were firm believers in witchcraft. John Wesley once said, "Giving up of witchcraft is giving up the Bible." After all, was it not Moses who said, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live?"

The failure of crops or an epidemic among cattle was attributed to a spell cast by a witch. At a famous witch

trial at Zug, Switzerland, in 1737, the judges showed themselves to be under the spell of the universal belief in witchcraft so much that they could not make themselves amenable to logic and reason. Kathri Gilli, the accused, had in her possession a small bag of white powder. Her accuser insisted it was used by Kathri to destroy the cattle. Kathri declared it was oat flour. A dog was given some. No ill effects. Kathri offered to eat some herself to no avail. The judges reasoned that since she was a witch, she might make the powder non-effective both for the dog and herself.

Women were the victims in witchcraft. The incidence of witches was estimated to be fifty times as frequent in occurrence as of wizards. It was believed that witches could transform themselves into animals, usually cats and rabbits, although hogs, dogs, wolves, goats, or birds were sometimes used. The evil eye fastened on a person produced a jinx or even death. Thus it affected a human being's health, his success; but it also blasted grain, fruit; spoiled eggs, butter, milk. The literature on witchcraft is abundant. Essentially the belief in witchcraft was born of a mental epidemic kept alive by tradition.

The belief in witchcraft flourished in the soil of primitive reasoning. Now primitive reasoning was characterized first by the type known as *post hoc ergo propter hoc* and, second, reasoning by analogy. When witchcraft ruled men's minds, people asked not, "What is the cause?" but "Who is the cause?" The voluntary confessions of so many of the accused reminds one today of the purge trials conducted in Soviet Russia not too many years ago. It represents a form of mass hysteria not unlike the fear of communism which has gripped so many American com-

munities today when scientists, liberal preachers, and teachers are so many times suspect.

Demoniacal Possession

It has not been too many years ago that the belief in demon possession was as common as the belief in measles or tuberculosis. It is still so in religious spots. The times have abolished the belief in witchcraft but not so completely in demon possession. The foundation of belief in both is in the Bible; yet one has vanished; the other remains. Many Christians believe that to elimnate demoniacal possession from their thinking would be to deny the Bible. Yet witchcraft has been given up and the Bible still stands. But the Christian need not "pooh pooh" the idea. Certain it is that on every hand one finds persons whose spirits seem to be directed by vicious intent and whose net conduct is evil.

Historical perspective is needed to understand any Biblical event. In Bible times everybody believed in demons. Abnormal behavior was understood to be caused by the indwelling malevolent spirit. Today the man of the street fails to understand such causation. Indeed, we have names today and even natural causes often for abnormal conduct, such as manic psychosis, schizophrenia, paranoia to mention only a few.

Joshua on one occasion commanded the sun to stand still. If our knowledge of astronomy is correct today, the sun never moved around the earth. The people at that time all believed the sun went around the earth. Joshua, even if he knew different, would still have had to accommodate himself to the beliefs of the people. So in Jesus' time the belief in demon possession was universal. Whatever may have been the facts of the cases with which Jesus

dealt, the fact remains that he would have to speak in terms the people could comprehend.

Demons have been much believed in in China and Japan, even before World War II. Only several hundred years ago the belief flourished in England, especially around Bristol. From John Wesley's journal we take an extract:

> October 25. I was sent for to one in Bristol who was taken ill the evening before. She lay on the ground furiously gnashing her teeth and after a while roared aloud. It was not easy for three or four hours to hold her, especially when the name of Jesus was named. We prayed. The violence of her symptoms ceased, although without a complete deliverance. [Wesley states that he was again sent for in the evening.] She began screaming before I came into the room and broke out into a horrid laughter, mixed with blasphemy, grievous to hear. One who from many circumstances apprehended a preternatural agent to be concerned in this, asking, "How didst thou dare to enter into a Christian?" was answered, "She is not a Christian, she is mine." Then another question, "Dost thou not tremble at the name of Jesus?" No words followed, but she shrank back and trembled exceedingly. "Art thou not increasing thine own damnation?" It was faintly answered, "Ay! Ay!" which was followed by fresh cursing and blasphemy . . . with spitting, and all the expressions of strong aversion.

Again, the second day after, Wesley called and prayed with her with the happy conclusion that "all her pangs ceased in a moment, she was filled with peace, and knew that the son of wickedness was departed from her."

Other Distortions of Religious Behavior

Psychology has given us an insight into motivations which account for some religious aberrations. The memories of unpleasant experiences or consciousness of unattained ideals provide the groundwork for the forming of complexes which widely affect behavior. Persons so afflicted may seek escape by finding another path of expression. These escape mechanisms often take religious forms.

One such expression might be termed false sanctification. Some souls thwarted in life wrap about themselves the cloak of holiness. They wash their hands of the church of which they have been members for years and seek religious sanctification by identifying themselves with some fanatical group which specializes in ascetic negativism. At last their souls feel they have attained. Characteristically they become critical of others' conduct and religious ideals. Such persons, having failed to make a satisfactory adjustment to life, retreat and find glory in being holier. This, of course, has the suggestion of an old mental disorder paranoia.

One of the forms taken by these people is the practice both in thinking and conduct of extreme fanaticism, savoring of an evangelistic militancy calculated to convert others to the viewpoint or else castigate those who do not accept as being lost. It is to be recognized that if someone rides an idea hard, he himself is having a conflict and his enunciations or denunciations represent an effort to convince himself as well that he is right. One such case is that of Barrie's story *The Little Minister,* in which the minister, having fallen in love with a gypsy girl and knowing that in his position he could not marry her, resorts to denunciation of women as the source of evil in

sermon after sermon, preaching, of course, primarily to himself.

Another such experience has been called the inspirational state, which is to be conceived as a period of special possession. Writers and artists are supposed to be possessed at times by such a state; so the experience is not confined to religion. Sometimes such revelations seem to come to them in dreams. The explanation here is, of course, the working of the mind in the subliminal field while one is relaxed.

Still other forms of behavior sometimes found in group worship among certain sects include the falling exercise; the holy jerks; the holy laugh; jumping; handclapping to music; raising hands aloft; bouncing; shouting such shibboleths as "glory, glory, glory," "halleluiah," "Jesus only"; and going into cataleptic states.

One cannot pass over a discussion of this subject without mentioning the emphasis given in some quarters upon the absolutes. One movement plays up strong absolute attainment of high and noble qualities. Suffice it to say that man never attains such heights of holiness while he is yet finite. Absolute love, for example, is a noble ideal, but only God and the angels above are characterized by such wholeness of character.

All the unusual states discussed in this chapter are to be understood as being abnormal, and for the most part they are expressions of psychological laws either fully or at least partly understood. The functioning of our mental life often seems strange, but more and more we are understanding its machinations.

Appendix C, at the end of the book, contains an account of a visit made by the writer to a meeting of one of

the movements which has received much publicity as a sample of the abnormal.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WORSHIP

Recognition of a higher power whom mankind can adore, look up to, is fundamental in religion. God, to be God, must possess something of the quality of the unknown. He must always be at least in part, unknowable. If we understood him perfectly, he would cease to be God. Once the nature and constitution of the sun was understood, it ceased to be worshiped. If, then, God is higher than man, someone more powerful, if He is the creator of man; then it is natural for man to adore Him.

Prayer

The first vehicle for such worship is what we call prayer or communion with God. Prayer is conceived by many people as petition, begging God for something. Note how large a content of so many people's prayers is just that and nothing more. Such people are like the spoiled child who looks upon father as one who exists primarily to hand down something to his child. Love is always a two-way expression. It is not to be conceived as the lazy man's route for getting favors by a short-cut route from God.

A vital question here is, does prayer work. It has been charged that prayer is useless, that God would give us what we pray for anyway. Prayer is often made for rain. Is it not true, it is urged, that in due time it will rain, prayer or no prayer?

A second question here is, could it not be true that

prayer is just self-hypnosis? Are not the effects of prayer purely subjective effects? Well there may be subjective values here, but if so, they must be rated as being real values. Is it not true, too, that there would be no value at all, even subjective, if we believed when we prayed that we were just conditioning ourselves? There would be something of hypocrisy about that.

It has also been argued that prayer detracts from the personality and strength of a man, reduces him to an abject condition. Why not stand upon one's own feet and be courageous and self-reliant? Such people with such an attitude would be a strange sort. They would be ultra independent; therefore, difficult persons. And, after all, what is man that he should even dare to believe in a maximum self-reliance as possible of attainment? We are too obviously interdependent in our world for that.

Some urge, too, that prayer is an escape mechanism. People take refuge there as a substitute for putting forth valiant efforts for social good. Prayer, they say, is a poor substitute for action. It is just the dessert of the selfish man who wants to be blest all the time by God. He wants something approaching ecstatic intoxication.

If we postulate an omnipotent theistic God, it is not hard to believe in the objectivity of prayer. God does something when we pray, if only to change our attitude. That is something more than the subjective. Man is not too insignificant to be noticed by his Maker. God being both a rational being and a good being could not possibly answer all petitions made to Him. He could not, for two persons or two groups, often have divergent purposes. In the very nature of the case, the yielding to one would be denying the other. Witness in war how God is often importuned by both opposing sides for aid.

Once it is recognized that God established the laws of the universe, one will begin to realize how inconsistent it would be to pray for Him to break these laws for us. Likely we do not know all the natural laws of God. It could easily be that there are operating, at the moment, other unknown laws which transcend those we do know.

More and more man needs to learn that prayer is prostituted if it is not primarily conceived as worship. There will then be more of adoration and thanksgiving than is ordinarily in the composition of most prayers. Now prayers of petition have their place, too. Certainly it is right to pray for moral help. Jesus even taught us to pray for bread, but note how little of His prayer was given over to that. Again, petitions for the sick are valid as well as prayers for others.

Without prayer, religious experience cannot expect to survive. It is a means of keeping alive the spirit of man. Man needs to energize his prayers. Cromwell once said to his soldiers, "Trust God and keep your powder dry," and Dr. Chalmers once said, "We are to pray as though God did all, and then work as though we did all."

Music

It has been said that music is the language of feeling. Music is not intellectual, but falls mostly somewhere along the line of affective connotations. Music, along with other emotions, has the potential of producing physical responses which in the high moral realm might result in highly ethical action of some sort.

Music of a certain type may make a person feel sad and lonely. It may result in some sort of low level of emotional expression such as handclapping, or it may reach the high

level of expression of causing a man to write a check to some philanthropy.

We have already pointed out that emotions as such differ quantitatively rather than qualitatively. There probably is, strictly speaking, no religious music outside of its connotation. By mental association, however, and particularly by association with words which give rise to concepts, music earns a right to be called religious.

On Sunday morning, people assemble for a church service. Many of them will bring along with them their worries and difficulties, or at least mental attitudes born of the experiences of the week. The service presents a golden opportunity to lift the soul from the petty and the annoying and to put it in tune with God. Music is one of the most admirable vehicles for accomplishing that end. Soft music may calm the spirit and soothe the ruffled soul. It may have the effect of melting the crowd into a unity of spirit. Much of this can be accomplished by use of the pipe organ, the king of church musical instruments.

The molding effect of most church music grows out of the use of words. Whether the spirit of man is to be carried to the highest and loftiest plane of religious feeling depends largely on the words employed. The gospel song, a product of the informal church service, most often has for its aim a subjective value. The worshiper indeed may shrink his religious outlook by his exclusiveness born of such gospel songs that produce the comment that the worshiper has a kind of monopoly on God. Example: "He Walks with Me and He Talks with Me." Many of the songs used in some church services cheapen religion by approaching the popular song. Many popular songs have been paraphrased to fit religion. Most hymnals today have too many "I" hymns, and too few "we" ones which

focus attention on God, His qualities, His Powers. On the other hand, there are the sublime hymns which express grandeur and adoration and lift the worshiper into the presence of God, getting him out of his skin, so to speak. How well is that accomplished in Bishop Heber's:

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, Holy, Holy, merciful and mighty,
Perfect in power, in love, and purity.

Songs of thanksgiving likewise have a place in worship. When the Israelites crossed the Red Sea successfully and the hosts of Pharaoh were destroyed, there were songs of victory and rejoicing. Songs of thanksgiving are always in order and always to be conceived as part of the worship.

Church history records the fact that for a long period songs were taken from the congregation and given to boy choirs or monks. That very process made for decay of religious life. When the reformation started in Germany, there was a restoration of congregational singing.

Coleridge says that "Martin Luther did as much for religion by his hymns as he did by his translation of the Bible." It was the hymns of the Wesleys which, as much as their preaching, brought about a spiritual revival in Britain. After all, how far would Moody's preaching have gone, or how great an impression would it have made without Sankey; and how far short would Billy Sunday have measured without Rodeheaver.

Congregational singing will always have its effect on the pushing upward of religious experience. With everybody singing the same song, each individual is apt to be thinking the same thoughts and experiencing the same feel-

ings; the result is that the individual is lost in the mass and the various individuals in the congregation are unified into a composite whole, making it easier for the minister to speak to the people. Many have testified that it has been the music rather than the preaching that has won them to Christianity.

It is surprising but significant how few songs are sung by the average congregation in the course of a year. In some studies recently made, it was found that less than 100 of the more than 600 hymns in the hymnal were employed, and that as few as a dozen were sung repeatedly. All this would argue that it is the old songs that everybody knows which produce the best effect. Most hymnals could have three-fourths of the hymns deleted without serious loss to the worship service.

In a worship service, the minister constantly needs to be on the alert that the bizarre and cheap music does not supplant the grand hymns of the church. The songs are not really akin to dramatic acting, and anything that savors of the common should be avoided.

The therapeutic value of singing together is potentially great. In a way it is a form of group therapy. The English mystic Evelyn Underhill once said, "The hymn gathers the faithful together round the treasure of life which it contains, and breaks down as nothing else can the isolation of the soul." The hymn of graudeur tends to lift one's horizon, focusing one's attention outside oneself; the confessional element often found therein may relieve the sense of guilt, reduce anxiety, give one a sense of comfort or security, and identify oneself with the "army of the Lord" in strengthening one's purposes.

Note how the second stanza of the German "Te Deum Nun Danket" lifts the human spirit when it expresses itself

O May this bounteous God,
Through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us
And keep us in His grace,
And guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills
In this world and the next.

Even a modern hymn by Henry Van Dyke elevates one's mood by words and tune. Set to the joyful music of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, it is apt to surprise the gloomy soul out of his mundane interests by:

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee,
Opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day.

And note how Thomas Moore's poem set to music lifts the spirit and generates a sense of forgiveness and healing when he says:

Come, ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish,
Come to the mercy seat, fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts
Here tell your anguish:
Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.

Joy of the desolate, light of the straying,
Hope of the penitent, fadeless and pure,
Here speaks the Comforter
Tenderly saying,
Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot cure.

Held by love, to peace I win me,
Confident what e'er betide;
Safe in hope, Thy spirit in me,
With th' eternal power I hide;
Strength and health are mine, and valor
Bravely over care I ride.

Again how therapeutically inspired was Charles Wesley's hymn:

Thou hidden Source of calm repose,
Thou all-sufficient Love divine,
My help and refuge from my foes,
Secure I am while Thou art mine;
And lo, from sin, and grief, and shame,
I hide me, Jesus, in Thy name.

Jesus, my All-in-All Thou art:
My rest in toil, my ease in pain,
The healing of my broken heart,
In war my peace, in loss my gain,
My smile beneath the tyrant's frown:
In shame my glory and my crown.

Giving

Worship comes from the word *worthship*. The value we place upon God, His worth to us, is expressed in terms of

sacrifice or giving. Of course, there is a vast difference between the two. The widow who gave the mite was memorialized because she gave all she had. Too many professing Christians today worship God in their giving as badly as or worse than they do in their praying. Too many quarters and dollar bills adorn the church offering plates. The rule of giving practiced today is to give what is not needed, what will not be missed.

Even the tithe is not sacrificial giving. Under the Mosaic law the tenth was just the starting point; hence the terms *tithes and offerings* are used. Some people's tithe is a tenth of what is left after paying their bills. That would make the quarter or dollar bill acceptable. The tithe is a tenth out for God taken from the original income before other bills are paid.

We often hear a great deal about sacrifice. It is mostly a practice one reads about, however, for the persons you and I know, our neighbors and friends, do not sacrifice. At least they do not in my city. My friends keep warm in the winter with central heating plants. None has a stove now. In summer all of my friends have either air conditioners or fans. They all own carpets and rocking chairs. Their homes are equipped with sanitary plumbing. They have piped hot water — even soft hot water. Most of my friends no longer know how to walk! They ride in a shiny automobile a distance of two or three blocks to church. They eat well, they eat better than the mediaeval kings. Delicacies galore grace their tables. They eat off expensive china with sterling silver instead of plated. Shoes, food, dresses, clothes are fine. Even the ministry has fallen. Sacrifice? Not so you can notice it. Fine automobiles, fine houses, fine furnishings — luxury everywhere. Sacrifice, i.e., giving up for enterprises of religion — oh, only the extras!

God is little worshiped today by giving to Him. Our time, our energies, our work, our talents, our strength are all translated into gold on pay day; but what little worth we attach to God when we give Him so little of it. Yet, giving is the only method most persons ever have, to be missionaries, preachers, healers of the sick, easers of pain; to bring surcease of sorrow, encourage the discouraged, and save sinners. No apology should ever be made for giving, for taking an offering. It is a worshiping of God.

Collective Worship

Social worship not only bolsters up the continuing in the faith, but it is often the groundwork for converting others. So the early church was admonished not to neglect public assembly. Jesus was bound by the custom of going to church on the Jewish Sabbath. Seeing other people worshiping God and doing it with them sets up a mental reverberation which strengthens one's faith. Jesus recognized the psychological necessity of the formation of the visible church. Down through the ages men have collectively worshiped together and have been encouraged thereby. Too often, however, collective worship is the "be all and the end all" of Christianity. Too often the Christian asks to be counted out when it comes to lining up with race integrationists, the union cause, collective peace efforts, social ownership and control of natural resources. Joining forces with the "haves" party rather than the "have nots" is a popular diversion of rocking chair Christians who believe their label — Christians — fully justified when they join in the church service.

Too many persons attend church services to enjoy them or, as one has said, "to have their ears tickled." The church service, instead of being an end, should be a means of implementing the work God wants done on earth.

Some people are so busy attending church services that they have no time left to do the will of God.

The Aesthetic

Heaven itself is pictured in terms of gold and silver. The temple at Jerusalem was a work of art. Note the ornate embellishments which associated themselves with worship in the temple. The service itself was elaborate. The priests wore costly vestments. There were swinging censers and incense burning.

Puritanism reacted against elaborateness both in church and architecture and in the ritual elements of worship. With the Puritan spirit ugliness came to be regarded as a premium. Most Protestant churches today have tried to strike a happy medium; yet the swing unmistakably is in the direction of the rich, ritualistic service. True God can be worshiped under a tree, but God is the author of beauty, and worshiping Him in an architecture of beauty is undoubtedly well pleasing in his sight. Gothic architecture and the old stained glass windows became passé, but today there is an unmistakable trend toward the symbols which point the way to, and make worship easy.

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CHAPTER XIV

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss certain experiences which affect religious living for better or for worse.

Doubt

Doubt is an essential element of the thinking process. Only a mind that does not think at all is free from it. Doubt crops out when a cherished belief has had the props knocked out from under it. Most of what we believe we have come to as a result of effective teaching. By teaching here is meant not classroom instruction as much as convictions reached, evolving out of a set of home conditions. The earlier doubts come, the better. They characterize adolescence. That is the period when they should come. There is a good chance then that insecure foundations will be replaced by secure ones. When doubts fail to bob up until later life, there is a chance then that a series of doubt experiences will produce a chronic doubter, just the same as a series of fortunate experiences coupled with belief produce the strengthening of beliefs.

Doubt has served well the cause of true religion. It has proved to be the destroyer of superstitions. Ghosts and demons have given way before it. A set of beliefs that have been handed down *ex cathedra* is an opponent of doubt, as is any religion which relies on authority, custom, tradition. *Pseudo*-religion has been true religion's

greatest enemy. When Galileo and Copernicus threw doubt on the theory of the flatness of the earth, they were opposed because a belief in the rotundity of the world ran counter to religious belief. Too bad that the flatness theory was supported so strongly by religion; for when truth demonstrated its falsity, the faith of many was shattered. Did not the new truth deny the Bible? So the people had been taught. Fifty years ago the battle was on between the evolutionists and the fundamentalists who insisted on a liberal interpretation of the Genesis account of creation. Coming out of a fundamentalist background, many high school and college students found their faith shattered by the doubt cast upon their cherished beliefs.

Doubt is not only negative; it plays the role also of a great builder. Unhappily, it has been conceived by dogmatists as the first step down to destruction. It is equally well, if not better, conceived as the first step up to freedom and enlightenment. Thus it may be a highly moral process. Through doubt, John the Baptist had his belief in Christ reestablished. Jesus did not try to do John's thinking for him as some churches would do for their adherents. Jesus gave neither a yes-or-no answer, but rather one that would help John reach his own conclusion. That principle is still fundamental today. Thomas likewise had his doubts removed, not by a categorical affirmation, but by the suggestion that he investigate further. Conclusions reached after doubt will be sounder, last longer, and be more invulnerable. Tennyson was right when he said,

> There lives more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds.

Habits

Thorndike, the psychologist, once said that forming habits is like acquiring capital. Harmful habits on the other hand might be likened to debts. Ever since Aristotle wrote the Second Book of the *Ethics,* men have been reminded that virtuous habits are formed when natural desires are guided to appropriate acts. For Aristotle the prize was to go to the man who had won it in dust and heat; not to the spectator for his strength and beauty, however great they be. Physiologists tell us that our nervous systems grow to the modes in which they have been exercised.

Well-formed habits have their advantages: they make moral actions easier — into a sort of second nature; they permit conscious attention to be economized; they set up a moral tradition which seals good conduct in a mold, the traces of which it is difficult to kick over. One of the finest stories which enforce this fact is found in that told by Tennyson of the kitchen knave, Gareth, who would become one of King Arthur's knights, and Lynette, whose sister was held prisoner by a robber knight. Gareth won the right to go on the quest, much to the disgust of Lynette, who had hoped the task would be assigned to such a stalwart as Lancelot. Three enemy knights were pictured as the obstacles to be overcome. Morning Star was a difficult opponent, but after a long tussle, Gareth vanquished him. Noon-day Star was in appearance stronger, better armed, more formidable, but Gareth had an easier time of it in the combat than he had with Morning Star. Last he encountered Evening Star who was seemingly best armed, most formidable. To Gareth's surprise he conquered Evening Star most easily of the three. The point to be drawn from the story is that Gareth had gained by the habit of conquering. The habit of success stood him in good stead

when he otherwise would have had his hardest battle.

James in his little book *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and to Students on some of Life's Ideals* presents a golden chapter on the laws of habit. After quoting the Duke of Wellington as having said that habit is "ten times nature," and that ninety-nine hundredths and even nine hundred ninety-nine thousands of our activity is habitual, he launches into a discussion of laws of habit formation, part of which he gets from Bain. First he emphasizes the need of starting the new habit with a strong initiative. Here is where the value comes in of the public confession of the person who accepts discipleship. A German with whom the author once was traveling had been trying to quit his chain cigarette smoking for years. He decided this trip would be the real occasion. He sat in the non-smoking compartment of the coach, but couldn't stand it. He succeeded in cutting down to only three the first lap of the journey. Next day he did as well but no better. The third day he did worse, as did he on the fourth and fifth days. The sixth night in a hotel when he was offered by a doctor an assortment of choice cigarettes, he startled us by seizing several, tearing them to bits, stamping on the pieces, and loudly proclaiming that never again would he be caught smoking one. With such a dramatic start, no wonder he succeeded thereafter, as far as is known.

A second rule of James is never to let a single exception occur, at least until the new habit is firmly rooted. A third is to take advantage of every chance to put into practice the new habit. James quotes Darwin as saying,

> Up to the age of thirty or beyond it, poetry of many kinds gave me great pleasure; and even as a school boy I took intense delight in Shakespeare, especially in the

historical plays. I have also said that pictures formerly gave me considerable, and music very great delight. But now for many years I cannot endure to read a line of poetry. I have tried lately to read Shakespeare, and found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated me. I have also almost lost my taste for pictures or music. . . . My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of a large collections of facts; but why this should have caused the atrophy of that part of brain alone, on which the higher tastes depend, I cannot conceive. . . . If I had to live my life again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week; for perhaps the parts of my brain now atrophied would thus have been kept alive through use. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature.

James closes this famous chapter by advising everyone to do something he does not have to do every day. Strong words close this chapter:

The hell to be endured hereafter, of which theology tells, is no worse than the hell we make for ourselves in this world by habitually fashioning our characters in the wrong way. Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state. We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone. Every smallest stroke of virtue or vice leaves its never-so-little scar. The drunken Rip Van Winkle, in Jefferson's play, excuses himself

for every fresh dereliction by saying, "I won't count this time!" Well, he may not count it, and a kind Heaven may not count it, but it is being counted none the less. Down among his nerve-cells and fibers the molecules are counting it, registering and storing it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out.

Of course, this has its good side as well as its bad one. As we become permanent drunkards by so many separate drinks, so we become saints in the moral, and authorities and experts in the practical and scientific spheres, by so many separate acts and hours of work. Let no youth have any anxiety about the upshot of his education, whatever the line of it may be. If he keep faithfully busy each hour of the working day, he may safely leave the final result to itself. He can with perfect certainty count on waking up some fine morning to find himself one of the competent ones of his generation, in whatever pursuit he may have singled out. Silently, between all the details of his business, the *power of judging* in all that class of matter will have built itself up within him as a possession that will never pass away. Young people should know this truth in advance. The ignorance of it has probably engendered more discouragement and faint-heartedness in youths embarking on arduous careers than all other causes put together.

Negativism

In a recent letter to *Time,* the writer, a Roman Catholic, pointed out the reason why the *Christian Herald* claimed four million converts from Roman Catholicism to Protestantism. Said the *Time* reader:

> I'd like to tell you why . . . Roman Catholics become "converts" to Protestantism. It's because it's so much easier to lie abed Sunday mornings than go to Mass; because the practice of birth control allows one to spend one's income on oneself instead of on a family; because divorce is so convenient when you're tired of your spouse and fancy a change; because it's nice . . . not to have to fast during Lent. I could go on indefinitely pointing out the discipline and restraint placed on Catholics by Holy Mother Church. I hate to disillusion the Reverend Daniel Poling, but the fact remains: his "converts" are the weaklings, the misfits, the self-indulgent. A Catholic's life is not easy. But then, neither was Christ's.

In spite of the observations of the *Time* reader, the fact remains that the offer of austerity, asceticism, self-denial has always appealed to men. In spite of the necessary vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, men still take the vows and enter orders. The appeal to negatives will gain adherents, but the question of sincerity and truth are legitimate objections to raise here. Man's spirit is not free if hemmed in by artificial restrictions. The emphasis here is properly on the word *artificial,* for true it is that the Christian religion does have some self-denial in it. Jesus so taught. Too often, however, has the Christian religion meant uppermost negative restrictions extraneous to the true spirit of religion. Jesus said He came to free men's souls.

Subjectivism

Psychological clinics register many patients whose mental condition is at least aggravated by religious subjec-

tivism. By the term is to be understood a focusing of attention upon oneself, an over self-examination, a frequent checking upon one's thought, words, and actions. Such an orientation tends to accentuate one's weaknesses and failures, and a morbid state ensues.

Time and again sensitive consciences have been rubbed raw by sermons which, under the guise of attaining holiness, have set up standards impossible of attainment. Often today a person gets the idea that he has committed the unpardonable sin, or that he has a demon because he fell short in some way. Such persons soon develop into pathological cases. One woman, after hearing her minister preach a sermon on self-examination, made out a list of persons whom she had placed question marks on. Forthwith she proceeded to get in her automobile to call on each one to ask forgiveness for the unkind thought.

The old-fashioned revival meeting has often been guilty of an excessive subjective emphasis, calculated to upset persons, get them to the altar, count their noses.

Holiness preachers are prone to produce such sensitive souls. Standards are held so high that people feel condemned when they realize they have not lived up to the standard set forth. They fail to note that their fellows with the highest profession of religion and even the preacher himself, most often, measured by an absolute standard, fall short.

Objective emphasis is needed today. Our churches have improved, but there is yet room for advancement. The kingdom of God has so scantily come that preaching the concrete aspects of the kingdom objectively seldom calls forth action thoroughly Christian on the part of the communicants as well as on the part of those who have not made commitments.

Work

Ames in his book *The Psychology of Religious Experience* emphasizes the fact that the religious person is one who is sensitive and responds to social demands. Slum conditions, taverns, gambling are cancers apparent in most every community. Unhealthy amusements are everywhere. Unregulated comics and television sponsorship abound. Corrupt government; the crushing of minorities, racial, national, and religious; the McCarthyism censorship of the pulpit, college, and public school is sensed on every hand. These are but a few of the matters which challenge him to assert the Christian spirit at every turn of the road.

As the muscle is strengthened by exercise, so the soul grows by activity in the work of the kingdom. A Christian concern and a Christian stroke for right and truth are crying needs of the day. Only as one works at his religion, does his soul expand.

Participation in the Religious Service

A well-known American general recently said he thought Jehovah's witnesses were literally correct when they claimed a ministerial deferment for each of their men of draft age on the theory that every member of their sect was a preacher. He went on to say the recognized denominations had lost that categorical imperative of witnessing each one for Christ.

Many Christians salve their consciences by participating in what they call an old-fashioned prayer meeting in which each one takes the floor to tell how near God has been to him, and where he thanks God that he is saved — not as other men are. Such testimony is scarcely worthy of the name. It begets a supercilious conceit. It begets an

"holier than thou" frame of mind. It is in the concrete situations of life — as neighbors, factory workers, store and office clerks — that men demonstrate and testify really either that they are good, average, or poor followers of Christ.

Here again one evidences certain participation when he gives of his money. What he gives, shares, even preaches for him. Group participation in song, scripture reading, and praying all strengthen the inner spirit when entered into collectively as well as when done privately.

The exclusiveness of the sermon is passing. The heart of the protestant service was preaching, but today, more and more, preaching is coming to be regarded as one and only one element in the worship of God in the public service. Many churches are even removing the preacher from being the center of attraction by placing him behind the pulpit at the side of the platform rather than at the center of the platform. Often one finds today the altar or cross, symbolic of the deeper and more important elements of worship, given the central place. Even the pipes of the organ and the choir are not shown off as they once were. Rather, emblems which symbolize the deeper things of religion are given the main places.

Persecution

Persecution is a thing most professing religionists try to avoid. Actually today the throwing of rotten eggs or tomatoes at people who promulgate unpopular doctrines is passé. But persecution has always been a wholesome thing for a religious group. Today if the religious man stands up for the union on strike or pacifism or racial equality, he may count on an effort's being made to get his job tomorrow or on some other squeeze technique by the ma-

jority. But persecution has always been a good thing for religion. For an individual to have to fight today will expand his soul in the effort, costly though it be.

On the other hand, an easy time in Christian living results in anemic spiritual existence. The cult of Naturism and the Tee Cult, recently mentioned by the editors of *Christianity and Crisis,* can be taken as examples of modern trends in effortless Christianity. The editors claim the gods of Naturism are worshiped at interfaith gatherings known as Summer Conferences. Here are located Cathedrals of Pines, for meditating on the beauty and straightness of trees rather than on the Creator of trees. Another cult, the Tee Cult, worships God on the golf course — through 18 "Stations of the Course" — instead of in church on Sunday morning. The experience of being at ease in Zion affects religious life adversely.

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CHAPTER XV

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF HEALING

Everybody is sick at least occasionally if that sickness consists of only a cold. Disease from time immemorial has been baffling to man. In spite of amazing progress, the cause of the common cold and its cure remain unknown. True is this of many other disorders.

In the last several decades scientific man has returned to the thesis of primitive man with respect to his conception of sickness. The psychosomatic approach today is very much like the notion of our early ancestors in that body and spirits are closely akin. In primitive society the priest and medicine man were one. The actual separation of religion and medicine as they treat healing of sickness has never really been accomplished.

The psychologist has every right to inquire into faith healing, but he stops at the threshold of divine healing although he does not hesitate to label much of what has passed as divine healing to be faith healing. Faith healing is scientifically tenable today. Strong emphasis, for example, is to be found in having the mind buoyant, cheerful, happy in the treatment of tuberculosis. The same emphasis is being found today in the treatment of cancer. Mikesell in his *Mental Hygiene* tells of the man with long-standing stomach trouble whose physicians could find nothing wrong with him. Finally a Chicago physician prescribed a big tender steak smothered in onions, with all the trimmings. To his amazement he ate it and nothing

happened. His fear and tension had been creating his own problem; now he was cured.

An interesting story was recently told of a well-known Indiana surgeon. A friend of his, Bill by name, was operated on and found to have cancer so widespread that the surgeon simply sewed him up without attempting to cut out tissue. A few days later the surgeon told his very good friend that he had only a few months to live at the outside and that he was telling him so he could set his house in order before passing away. His patient replied that he did not intend to die. That was more than twenty years ago. The man moved West and is still alive. No divine healing was claimed. It was simply recorded by the surgeon as one of those unexplainable miraculous deviations.

The scientific man is apt to smile at the recited instances of healing outside the realm of science; but the healings of Dr. Locke, the toe twister, of Coué, the Nancy pharmacist who turned healer of thousands by his simple formula of "day by day" are too authentic and too numerous to be turned lightly aside. To the typical healings should be added those occurring at the shrines of Saint Anne de Beaupre and Lourdes. (See Appendix D here for an account of the author's visit to Lourdes.)

Occasionally one finds a religious sect rabid on the matter of faith healing. Practitioners are spoken of in a derogatory manner. Representing this extreme viewpoint, one member said he would not even take a cup of cold water if he thought it would help him physically in any way. Likely he had not read the medical prescription in the book of Ecclesiastes.

Generally speaking, healings fall within the area of the disorders of functional etiology. The structural abnormali-

ties are scarcely ever brought within the scope of healing efforts. So rare as to be almost non-existent today are the reports of restoration of feet, legs, fingers, hands, arms, eyes, cleft palates, hair lips, and the like. Organic diseases, such as cancer, diabetes, tuberculosis, scarlet and typhoid fever have only rare claims made for their elimination by religious healing, although there are certifications on record testifying to occasional restorations in these diseases. Likewise feeblemindedness is rarely claimed as being cured.

Among the mental disorders, there is a multitude of claims, many duly authenticated. The phobias, the obsessions, the hysterical paralyses, even functional blindness and deafness are frequently believed to be subject to religious healing. As an arm of religious healing, the best-known and earliest effort by the church is to be found in the Emmanuel Movement of Boston where Worcester, McComb, and Coriat did a remarkable work.

The June, 1955 meeting of the British and Canadian Medical Association in Toronto had on the program a paper by Dr. John R. Brobeck, professor of physiology at the University of Pennsylvania. *Time,* July 4, in its section on Religion, reported the occasion: Dr. Brobeck stated that we are hearing more and more talk about the limitations of science and are realizing that many fields of human experience cannot be scientifically analyzed. Though the Christian accepts a miracle by faith, most scientists, because they are not Christians, fail to accept miracles. The thoughtful scientist, however, would say that miracles are not impossible, only improbable. As a Christian, Dr. Brobeck believes in miracles because of that miracle of the new birth which happened to him. Said he, "Many scientists have become a lot less positive about the prerogatives of science and the scientific method. . . ." He continued:

> Modern science no longer speaks about laws. What used to be called a law now is spoken of as a high probability because science cannot predict what an individual moleclue in a given population is likely to do. . . .
>
> Both Christian and scientist also agree that it is impossible to explain miracles in terms of our present understanding. This doesn't mean miracles are impossible, and the Christian accepts them by faith. . . . The attitude to science of the scientist who is not a Christian is rapidly approaching that of the scientist who is a Christian.

The emphasis today in the art of healing is on the psychosomatic approach. The whole man is ill when sickness attacks him. To cure him not only surgery and pills but religion also is a welcome handmaiden. *Time* touches this point in the August 1, 1955 issue, under the section on Medicine in an article "Psychiatry & Faith." This article recalls the Catholic Hour of the preceding week, during which a brilliant Roman Catholic, Karl Stern, chief of psychiatry at Ottawa General Hospital, denounced pitting psychiatry and religion against each other as if they were mutally exclusive. Also he lamented the anti-religious bias of psychiatrists who believe that science is the only fountain of truth and that revelation is "bunk." His own position is that we must make for cases of emotional disturbance the same clear distinction between natural and supernatural help that we make for cases of broken legs; then religion and psychiatry can pull together instead of conflicting.

Healthy religion promotes health. Pathological, oversubjectivism in religion promotes poor adjustment and sickness.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

A STUDY OF THE AGE AND CONFLICTS OF CONVERSION AND RECONSECRATIONS

This is a study of the factors which discourage young people in their religious profession. It reveals the influencing factors which seem to encourage a giving up of religious experience. It also reveals their ages at their first and second conversions, as their churches taught them to conceive conversion, length of the first profession and the length of time not professing, the time between the two conversions, the number of conversions and conflicts these individuals had.

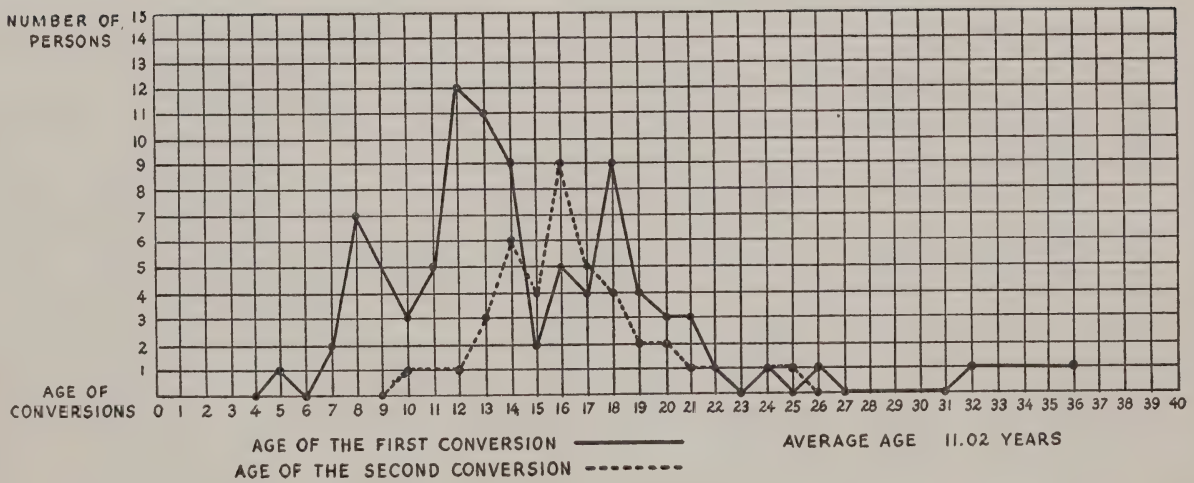
Studies were made of 100 college students. The first question was to determine the age of conversion. Graph I shows their ages at the first and second conversions.

Graph I shows that 60 per cent of the conversions take place before and up through the age of fourteen or at the very beginning of the adolescent period. This fact seems to be the result perhaps of early training in Sunday School along with rapid physical development of the adolescent and his awakening to new responsibilities of life as a whole.

Forty-four of the returns stated that the students were still professing Christians. Graph II shows the length of time that those who were converted twice continued their profession after the first conversion.

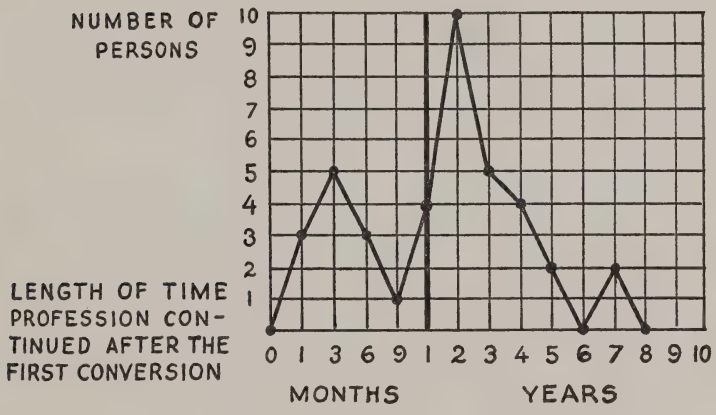
GRAPH I

THE AGE OF CONVERSION



GRAPH II

LENGTH OF TIME PROFESSION CONTINUED AFTER FIRST CONVERSION



The third question determines two things: the time between the two conversions and the length of time these young people, now college students, did not profess to be Christians. Graph III shows the time between the two conversions.

The second part to the third question reveals the time between the giving up and the renewal of the profession. See the illustration in Graph IV.

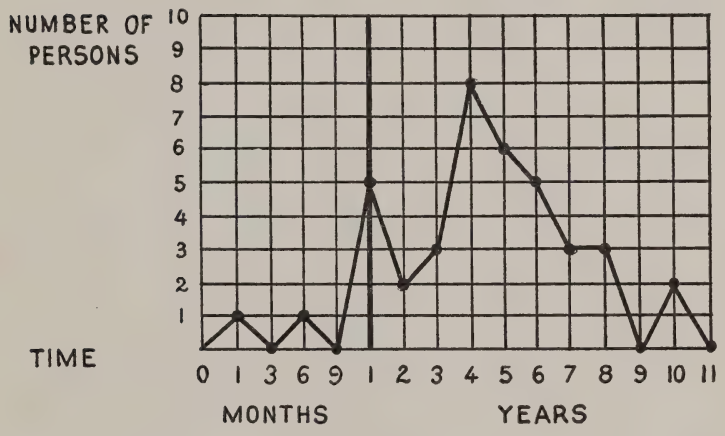
The fourth question (see Graph V) deals with the number of conversions that each individual experienced.

In Graph VI is illustrated the number of conflicts marked by the entire returns. It demonstrates whether these persons have had few or many influencing factors which tend to discourage them in their Christian profession.

Graph VI shows that the average person has four major conflicts. It is strange that 40 per cent of the people do not have conflicts, and those that do, have only a small number of them. The double graph, Graph VII, exhibits the number of conflicts with one conversion compared with the number of conflicts of those who have more than one conversion. It is noticed that those of two conversions have many more conflicts than those of one. What is the cause? Are the people of two conversions weaker in character? Or was their environment and training such that they were doomed to failure? These questions cannot be answered by any questionnaire; there must be other information at hand to substantiate some of the above conjectures.

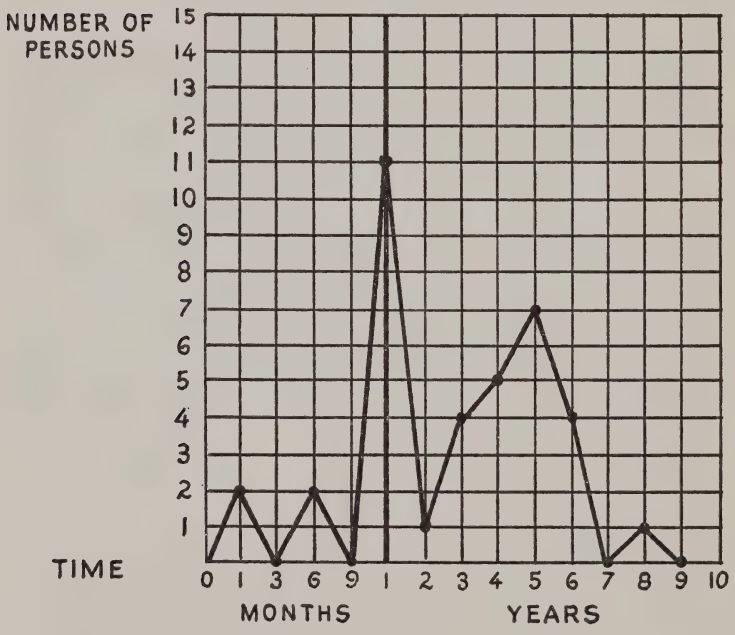
GRAPH III

TIME BETWEEN THE TWO CONVERSIONS



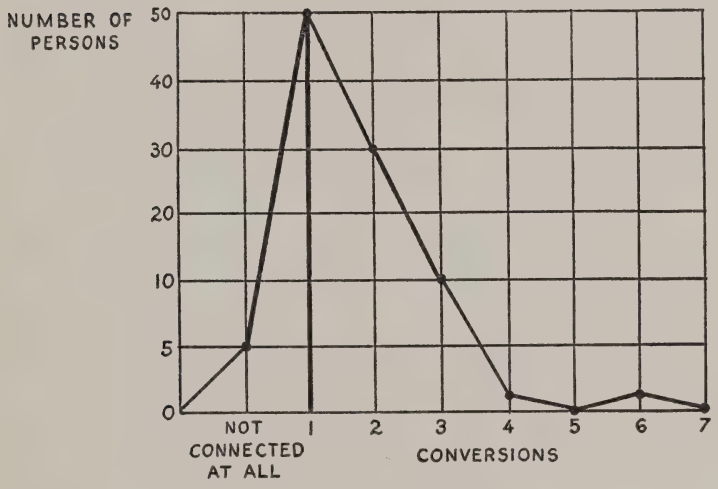
GRAPH IV

LENGTH OF TIME STUDENTS DID NOT PROFESS



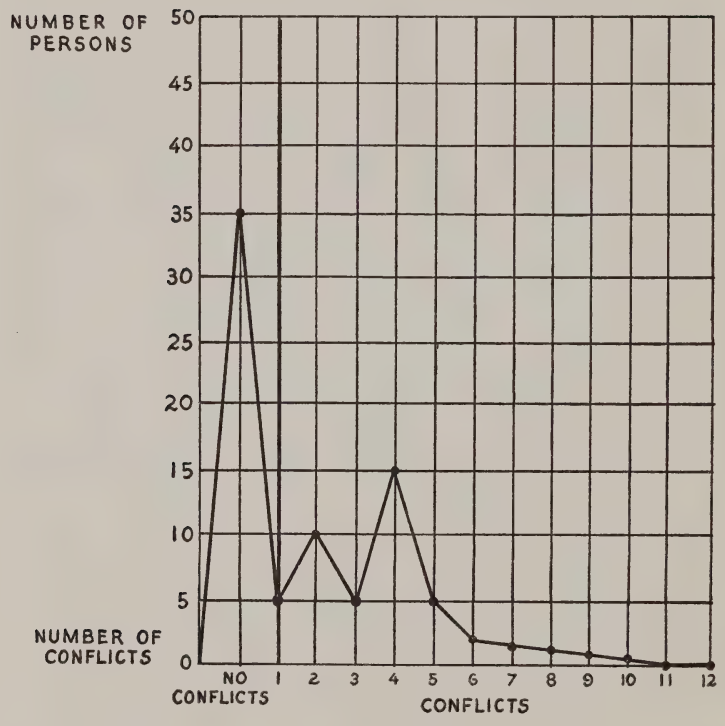
GRAPH V

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL CONVERSIONS



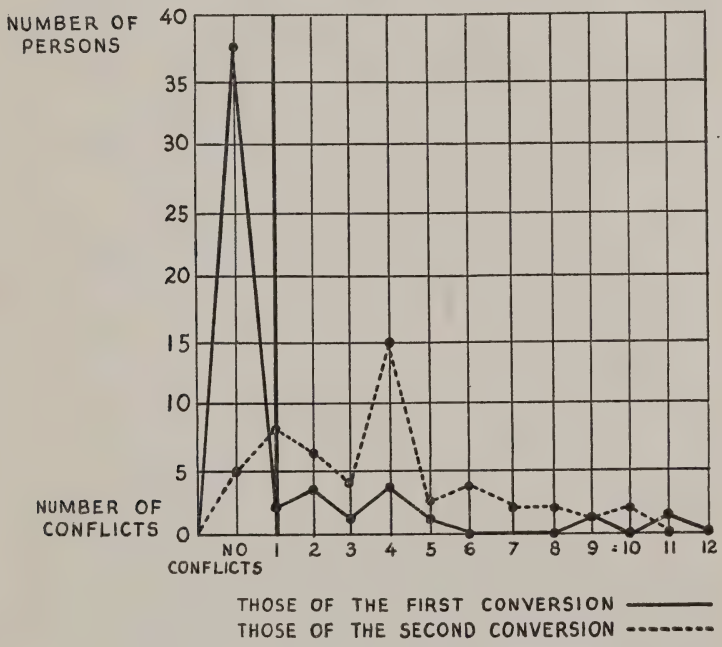
GRAPH VI

NUMBER OF CONFLICTS



GRAPH VII

COMPARISON OF CONFLICTS WITH ONE OR MORE CONVERSIONS



A STUDY OF DISCOURAGING FACTORS INFLUENCING A GIVING UP OF THE PROFESSION OF CHRISTIANITY

The questionnaire for this study read as follows:

Please fill out this questionnaire today, insert it in the enclosed self-addressed envelope, and drop it in the College mail. Do not sign your name.

1. At approximately what age were you converted?———
2. Length of time you continued your profession?———
3. How long was it after your first conversion until you accepted Christ again?———
4. How many times have you been converted?———
5. Check with an X the factors which influenced you to give up your profession.

Rank	Number Checking Answer	
	7	It gave me no social benefit.
	7	It took the pleasure out of life.
5th	14	Church afforded little social fellowship.
	7	Religion was too great a restraint, too little freedom was allowed.
5th	14	The indifference of my immediate friends who made a profession.
3rd	16	The indifference of Christians as a whole.
	9	No one seemed to be interested in me.
	8	It did not settle my problems.
	9	Rigidity of doctrinal standards held by some discouraged me.

4th	15	I was disillusioned by the standards held by some professors of religion.
	8	Religion fell short of my ideal.
	7	I was accused by others of not holding the doctrine or standard rigidly enough.
1st	25	My conscience condemed me over some little mistakes I made.
4th	15	Rigid preaching made me feel condemned.
	6	I experienced intellectual difficulties in believing certain doctrines.
2nd	22	I experienced emotional difficulties in apparently not feeling like someone else.
1st	25	I was troubled by doubt.
	4	The conflict between modern science and religion discouraged me.

Remarks: 66

Graph VII shows that only four persons who were converted twice or more did not check any conflicts. It also shows that thirty-seven persons who had no conflicts were converted only once. Why is there such a difference? Likely environment had a great deal to do with it. Perhaps more influential was the definition held out as to what being a Christian meant.

The tabulation of the discouraging factors influencing a giving up of Christianity indicates that doubt, a condemning conscience, and emotional difficulties rank as the three highest. The next five are almost equally balanced: Church offered little social followship; indifference of friends and Christians as a whole; disillusioned by the standards of others; and rigid preaching. The emotional difficulties would be expected. It is interesting to note that the conflict between modern science and religion had only

four check marks. Doubt seems to be unusually high. The rest seem to hold quite true to the experience of a certain protestant religious movement in its method of working with young people throughout America. An example of this would be the scarcity of social followship allowed by its churches a decade ago when most of the students reporting were converted.

The remarks appearing at the end of the questionnaire were of great importance. Certain students listed conflicts not mentioned on the check list, whereas others revealed the sad condition of their souls at the present time. Many explained facts about their early and later conversion. Those who have a sympathy and passion for youth perplexed by problems, let them but look at these remarks to have their zeal increased abundantly.

Of all fifty-eight converted up through age fourteen, 39 per cent remained converted; 61 per cent felt they had lost out, and were converted again. Of all twenty-five of those converted up through the age of eleven, 36 per cent remained converted, whereas 64 per cent gave up their profession and were later converted again.

Out of a total of 41, 19 checked *doubt* with either or both of the two conflicts: The condemnation of conscience over little mistakes; emotional difficulties in apparently not feeling like someone else. Fifteen checked either one of the two conflicts but did not check *doubt*. Only 7 checked *doubt* but did not check either of the two conflicts mentioned. Results seem to prove that those two conflicts stand out as being prominent in bringing doubt upon young converts, since 47 per cent of the group claimed one or both of the conflicts with *doubt* and 37 per cent admitted the conflicts but did not check *doubt*. [1]

1. **Study made, 1953 – 1954.**

APPENDIX B

THE DECLINE OF REVIVALISM AS NINE LEADING EVANGELISTS SEE IT

In a study made some twenty years ago, the following leading evangelists of the day entered into the correspondence conducted:

William A. Sunday
Bob Jones
H. A. Ironside
W. B. Riley
W. E. Biederwolf
J. C. Massee
Charles E. Jefferson
Paul Rader
Captain Reginald Wallis

Questions Asked and Answers Given

I. What was the largest average crowd in attendance in any given year at your meetings? In what year was this?

Billy Sunday — In 1915, 20,000 inside; 40,000 could not get in.
W. B. Riley — In 1925, 6,000.
H. A. Ironside — At present, from 8,000 to 10,000.
W. E. Biederwolf — In 1916, 6,000.
Captain Wallis — At present, 1,500.
Four evangelists did not answer these questions.

II. What size average crowd have you had in the past year?

Billy Sunday — 4,000.
W. B. Riley — 1,500.
W. E. Biederwolf — 3,000.
Captain Wallis — 1,500.
H. A. Ironside — From 8,000 to 10,000.
Paul Rader — Around 4,000 and 5,000.
Three evangelists did not answer.

III. Assuming a decline in revival crowds, what weight would you give the following suggested causes?

1. The automobile.
For and against — 2.
Against the revival — 3.
Four did not answer.
2. The radio.
A tendency to hurt meetings — 3.
Six did not answer.
3. The movies.
A big factor in causing a decline — 4.
Hurts only on Sunday nights — 1.
Four did not answer.
4. Excess of doctrinal preaching.
Not enough doctrinal preaching — 5.
Four did not answer.
5. Advanced and more widespread education.
None — 1.
False eucation; infidel teaching — 3.
Five did not answer.
6. New conception of the hereafter.
Can be no new conception — 1.
A factor — 1.
None — 1.
Of little importance — 1.
Five did not answer.

7. Changed idea of God.
No change — 1.
Confused idea of God — 1.
A great factor — 1.
Of no weight — 1.
Five did not answer.
8. Materialism.
Some weight — 1.
Largely — 2.
None — 1.
Five did not answer.
9. Higher criticism.
Some weight — 2.
Great importance — 2.
Five did not answer.
10. Modern concept of sin as a digression due to heredity.
A real cause — 2.
Of great importance — 1.
Six did not answer.
11. Life more objective.
No weight — 1.
Eight did not answer.
12. Higher moral plane with less emphasis upon need of redemption.
No — 1.
Lower moral plane — 2.
A great factor — 2.
Four did not answer.
13. Love of pleasure.
Greatest single cause — 3.
A growing reason — 4.
Two did not answer.

14. Lack of taste or desire for spiritual things.

An important reason — 3.

Six did not answer.

IV. What in your mind is the greatest cause for the decline in revival meeting attendance?

Modernism and Higher Criticism — 3.

Low grade evangelists — 1.

Godlessness; lack of Godly authority — 2.

Love for pleasure — 2.

One did not answer.

V. Do you think like some that the day of mass revivalism is gone?

No — 6.

Yes — 2.

One did not answer.

VI. Assuming that the day of mass evangelism is passing what will take its place?

Nothing — 3.

Combination of mass evangelism with personal or individual evangelism — 3.

Three did not answer.

One has but to read the answers to the questionnaire to see that a wide divergence of opinion exists. It would seem that the major evangelists themselves are far from being agreed on the causes of a decline in the revival, whether there is a decline, and whether or not mass evangelism is doomed for some time. A few facts, however, are prominent. There is ready agreement on the place of pleasure in the decline. It received more votes as the greatest single cause for a spiritual recession than any other condition. We also find that modernism and higher criticism received a high place among the causes, and

that the movies are pretty well branded as hurting the success of the revival. And two-thirds of the men said that the day of mass evangelism is not passing; three that nothing can take the place of the big revival. These figures include the men who address the largest crowds, as William A. Sunday, Paul Rader, and W. E. Biederwolf.

But what will these evangelists say to facts staring them in the face? William A. Sunday had an attendance of 20,000 inside and 40,000 outside in 1915; by now, 1933, he can attract only an average assembly of 4,000. Certainly he has lost ground. Yet he contends that nothing can take the place of mass evangelism. True enough, Paul Rader has crowds almost as large as ever, and H. A. Ironside seems to be keeping attendance high; but the majority are suffering a recession, and have to admit it. Several readily admit that the revival, as we have known it in its glaring prominence, is passing, and that there is now at hand the advent of individual or personal evangelism. Among these we find Charles E. Jefferson, J. C. Massee, and W. B. Riley. Bob Jones sees no decline in the revival spirit, but rather the introduction of new methods. Perhaps that is what it is to a degree, and yet, some of the old fervor seems to have slipped away.

With the possible exception of three, all admit a falling off in interest, attendance, and results. The majority, however, ignore the approach of the end, and confidently declare the world is going to the bad and mass evangelism, being the only cure, will always live.

Paul Rader says that professional evangelism is doomed, but vital Holy Spirit evangelism is just now coming. Without a doubt there is much truth in what he says, for true evangelism under the working of the Holy Spirit is bound to accomplish great things. He blames the trouble on a

lower moral plane, love for pleasure, and a lack of spirituality and consecration by evangelists and church people.

Reverend Ironside believed the questionnaire to be almost a sacrilege, for it "savors altogether too much of the pride of a science, falsely so called, that would seek to test spiritual realities by earthly standards." Moreover he stated that Christianity is a divine revelation from heaven and not a religion. Therefore it cannot be discussed from the standpoint of a religion, and thereby does not properly come under the heading of "Psychology of Religion." Yet from what he said, because the interest in his meetings seems to run high, he must use more psychology than many of his fellow evangelists. Too, we wonder what we are to do for something to worship if Christianity it not a religion. All men must worship something. What we worship determines largely our religion. Mr. Ironside seems to have ignored all facts in his assertion.

The majority resent the thought of the decline of mass revival and stress the idea that new and better methods and true Bible Christianity will bring back an increased wave of evangelism. In the minds of most, nothing can ever supplement or adequately take the place of mass revivalism. In the face of the words of these men, we find personal evangelism accomplishing unprecedented results, and mass evangelism dying out. F. F. Bosworth declares that it is impossible to get the interest or the crowds that he could hitherto. And he has addressed audiences numbering almost twenty thousand people.

The men who stand staunch in their conviction of the never-dying ability of mass evangelism, in scorning words brand the Y.M.C.A. and kindred organizations as being afraid of the truth, of the difficult way, and of substituting the easier way for mass evangelism. Sunday declares,

"Deny Jesus Christ as the son of God, deny His virgin birth, deny every cardinal doctrine, and you have turned hell into a cold storage plant. The same judgment awaits America that fell on Babylon. Back to God! Back to Christ! Back to the Bible!" And then he makes the startling statement that only three per cent of the population in America attend church, and it is even less in Germany and England.

As to the psychological reasons for the decline of the revival, all have pretty well intimated, either directly or indirectly, the basic reasons. People as a whole today do not fall prey so easily and quickly to suggestion. There are several explanations for this. First, there are so many distracting elements in our modern world that take attention from the revival. As the evangelists have said: the radio, the movies, the automobile, and pleasure seeking have all taken away much valuable interest which is the outgrowth of attention. Moreover, in this fast world our efforts are so differentiated and divided among a multitude of interests that one thing cannot well remain as long or as frequently in the focus of our attention. And attention is of vital importance for the work of suggestion. The revival is dependent to a large measure on the working of suggestion and psychic phenomena. It might be added that through more education people do not so readily believe or put trust in what they hear or see as they formerly did. People are more reasoning, more analytical. This last fact is probably the contribution of science. Thus we are now less moved by suggestion or feeling. Then, as the evangelists have pointed out, doubt and higher criticism have undermined faith, and consequently caused a falling off. As has been said, a revival cannot well succeed without psychic phenomena, without some rule of

hypnosis and mob mind. Since this is not so possible today, it follows that this is one of the fundamental reasons for the decline.

It would be useless to attempt an arrival at a really definite conclusion in this matter, based on the varied and clashing statements of these evangelists. One believes one thing; another totally disagrees. This we can say: All agree that there is a general decline in attendance, looking at the proposition as a whole, though some are enjoying their most fruitful years. The majority are still holding tightly to mass evangelism as the hope of humanity's getting in vital touch with God. However, a few are seeing the advisability of a better program in which both mass and individual evangelism shall be employed. Those who follow this plan are pastors as well as evangelists. Those who take the former stand are mostly traveling evangelists.

All condemn pleasure and lack of true Bible salvation and spirituality. Otherwise all disagree in two-thirds of the points. It is hard to look into the future, but it is probable that a number of the still unmoved stand-pats will change to newer methods. Yet the situation promises well from the view that all see the great need for deeper depths of religious experience, for more definite conversions, for less man and more Christ.[1]

1. **Study made, March, 1933.**

APPENDIX C

FATHER DIVINE, HARLEM'S GOD, THE DECADE'S GREAT RELIGIOUS DELUSION

Yes, we had not mistaken the Harlem neighborhood. "Peace Vegetable Store," "Peace Barber Shop," "Peace Restaurant," all confirmed the fact that we had arrived in the vicinity of the "God's" principal "Heaven" or "Kingdom." ("Peace," it may be said, is a sort of password or greeting for the current salutation "Hello.")

The press of the crowd was already great. We pushed our way into the banquet room at 7:45 o'clock that night, destined not to leave the "Kingdom" until after midnight. Just outside we were met by an attractive young colored woman robed in white who announced to us that she was one of the angels, a member of the speaker's bureau. It was she whom we came to call Gabriel.

Immediately seats were provided for us, and we set to the task of engaging in conversation to orient ourselves to our strange surroundings. It was at this point that Gabriel told us she had taken steps to interview Hauptman on behalf of God! The letter had not been sent until late, but she knew it would be in time, for Father Divine had arranged it that Bruno would not be electrocuted then; and sure enough he was given a reprieve by Governor Hoffman that very day.

Learning that the center of operations for the next few hours was to be in the auditorium above, we made our way to higher ground after being promised that not only

could we get in, but reserved seats on the platform should be ours! Sure enough there were the platform seats unoccupied waiting for us. In and out through the throng we pressed our way to the coveted seats. Upon reaching the platform, we were told by one of the "Voices of God" that we would be expected to speak, too, along with Father Divine and others from out of the state, for this was visitors' night. We begged off, not sure we should be able to say the acceptable thing in the presence of Father Divine and so many angels.

Father Divine had not yet arrived but the meeting was going full swing. Such singing, such handclapping, such waving of handkerchiefs, such stamping of feet! Interspersed were confessions made to "Father" who, although not yet there in corporeal body, nevertheless heard in spirit. One man confessed embezzling forty dollars. Testimonies and confessions ended with assurance, for there was always the "Thank you, Father" at the close.

Their songs comprehended a sentimental working over of such popular jazz songs as "I Can't Give You Anything but Love, Baby," which was paraphrased to read "I Can't Give You Anything but Love, Father Divine." In addition to the metamorphosed croon songs, the old camp meeting and revival songs were likewise revamped to fit into the occasion. Many times, too, under the emotional inspiration of the moment, such songs were improvised as

I love you with all my heart,
I'll serve you with all heart,
  Father Divine.
I'll trust you with all my heart,
I'll obey you with all my heart,
  Father Divine.

There are two things that often happen even to the strongest souls when the setup is such that the laws of social psychology demand full and free sway of operation. One is for everybody to succumb to the excitement and join in; the other is to faint. Several times I looked around anxiously at the rest of our party to see what was happening. Sure enough one was getting pale and some of the others were helping keep time to the music with hands and feet.

Then came one of the high points. The auditorium, packed as it was even in the aisles, had become poisonously hot. Everyone was perspiring. Suddenly a strong militant song struck up. Everyone electrically charged rose up as one man, swayed back and forth, pulled out pocket handkerchiefs and waved them frantically; then at the chorus some jumped up and down, most of the others hopped from foot to foot; some women seized others in their ecstasy and twirled and jigged around and around. A high emotional moment had arrived; tensely and fearfully we sat there not knowing what the next course of this seizure might take. It was too much for one member of our party who under the gaze of one thousand eyes made an exit via the trap door on the platform. The rear entrance, the only other one, by this time was absolutely cut off, so great was the throng.

Just then through an open window we saw Father Divine ascending the stairs to his office. What a shout of adoration went up from the multitude! After a while those of our party who had gone out returned to inform us that an angel had told them we might see Father Divine in his office. Out all of us then went through the trap door. Father Divine had just returned from out of the big city in a big limousine and now he was pressed by

reporters, besides being busily engaged in preparing a manuscript for publication. One of his secretaries — he has seven — a white woman, told us he would see us but it might be many hours later. She advised that we first go to the lower banquet room where he would eat with his angels at 10:00 P. M. Gabriel seemed to take an interest in us. Not only did she always pilot us around, but she gave us much atmosphere and many facts.

It was 10:00 P. M. but the banquet was not ready. Yet who should suddenly unannounced bolt into the feast room but "Jesus Christ, the very God, materialized again after 2,000 years, right here on earth — in Harlem — in this room." There were cheers, fierce handclapping, ecstatic gestures of adoration. He was their idol, their God. No mistake about that! One woman publicly testified she would be supremely happy if she could get near enough just to have his shadow pass over her. She got more than her heart's desire — she even got to touch him, and believes ecstasy will be hers forever after.

He did not remain during this trip but a few minutes. His spirit felt drawn to go to the auditorium to address the vast throng. Into that electrically charged atmosphere he went —this stogy, bald-headed, black mustached little man of perhaps fifty years or more. The multitude swaying sang with vigor:

"Oh, my beautiful father, how I love you"
to the tune of
"Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me."

Then the mental contagion spread to the feet. Back and forth they intoxicatedly jumped. Then horrors! We looked up. The ceiling actually gave down inches. Terror

stricken I turned to Gabriel and said, "Look! Won't it crash down on us? Has it ever happened before?"

Reassuringly she soothed our distressed spirits by pointing out that with "God" there nothing could happen! Outwardly calm, but inwardly suspicious, I spent the next few minutes in periodically but slyly glancing up to see that all was well.

The "Lord God Almighty" explained in his sermon upstairs — we remained below at the banquet table but heard through a loud speaker — that although his bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible, still he, by his spirit, did things in actions, not words, and worked through his followers. (He claims twenty-two million followers in all.) He reminded them, too, that he always heard even though he was not present physically. "Moreover," said he, "even when present I may not act like I hear you and see you, but I do anyway."

The banquet table seated perhaps a hundred or more. Father Divine's personal table seated about twelve. We sat just at the end of it. Nothing was allowed to pass across this table; everything and everybody to get on the other side had to go under it. Chefs and waitresses worked at top-notch speed now under the direction of the angel we labeled Michael, for purposes of identification. It might be said here that everyone acknowledged every courtesy with "Thank you, Father."

It was now almost 11:00 P.M. Cries of "Peace" rang out! A hush came over all! (We were jammed in this banquet room like sardines in a can.) Breathlessly we waited until in again came the "Lord God Omnipotent." The angels quickly took their places. We were not prepared for the next act. Father Divine slung coffee into cups at such a dizzy rate without spilling a drop and with

such graceful sweeping arm movements that we sat there amazed at his dexterity. Not only that but every dish of food had to pass first through his hands (he puts each spoon and fork in) before it was passed. But all dishes moved with a dexterity and lightning-like speed born of skillful practice. This banquet was a twice-a-day occurrence, we were informed. And what a banquet! There were chicken, fish, and three other kinds of meat, to say nothing of the vegetables!

While Father Divine and his angels ate, the surrounding worshipers sang again and again, "How I love you, how good, beautiful, noble and true are you," to the tune of "Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me." Interspread were confessions and testimonies to which Father Divine paid no visible attention although he was always addressed and the "Thank you, Father" closed what each one said.

It was predicted things would break up by 2:00 or 3:00 A.M., but a caucus by our party resulted in a decision to get to bed ourselves before dawn; so we decided to postpone the personal interview we were promised, until a later date.

How Can This Happen in 1936?

A question even more perplexing is, why has not the past few years seen even more widespread radical phenomena. Let us take a close-up view of New York City's Harlem. In 1929, according to New York's Urban League, 65 per cent of this colored area was owned by white people; today 95 per cent is so owned. Seventy per cent of the Negroes are jobless. Conditions in their tenements are reputedly worse than our party found two years ago on an investigating tour of the so-called worst territory in the east-side Bowery district among the foreign born, where

rooms were inhabited without windows and so were without fresh air or sunlight. Some of the places were even without running water or sanitary facilities. In these unsanitary, unventilated, unheated hovels of squalor, these people live like animals. They have tasted better material things and are restive under such conditions imposed upon them by a capitalistic society whose watchword has been "Get all you can!" and whose social philosophy has been based on greed and greed alone, in spite of its philanthropic, paternalistic gestures.

To this miserable material existence has been added a growing recognition of racial inequalities. There is a white delusion that the black man is a bigger thief, less civilized, naturally inferior, and more brutal than the white man and therefore deserving of less consideration.

No wonder then that under such conditions neuroses should develop. Of 18 of Father Divine's followers recently taken to Bellevue Hospital for a mental examination, 16 had well-defined psychoses. Not only there but people in a widespread way are becoming increasingly psychotic today. No wonder then that when a savior promises a down-trodden people a new deal and backs up his promises with deeds, they, hungry and worn, snatch at such hope and come in time, in accordance with the due working of psychological laws, to accept him as the God he is reputed to be.

He emphasizes the fact that he does his work in deeds. He serves dinners to the hungry for ten cents and a chicken dinner with all the trimmings for fifteen cents. The source of his income is carefully guarded. His interests in social justice for all people are widespread. His pronouncement "I stress the significance of the brotherhood of man" is poignant, coming as it does on the heels

of the Harlem race riot of a year ago.

A second explanation for this remarkable phenomenon is to be found in the spiritual satisfaction which it offers. The recurrent problem of how to be happy is as old as the effort on the part of man to think reflectively and critically. Men whose thinking is naive, whose minds have not been challenged by vision, are blissfully content and happy. Since the war with its moral disillusionment, the problem has come to the forefront with revitalized fury.

Now the Negro in particular — many of them from the South — has had his thinking rudely jarred. His transition has been more rapid. Those who know *Green Pastures* will appreciate the naive, anthropomorphic conception of God depicted there. To such a mind, God with physical form is more real. And now, unadjusted to a new mental and moral environment, it is but natural to revert to the God who has physical form, who speaks audibly by word of mouth, who sees and hears. Such a person, clothed with supernatural power, who is able to speak sins away and soothe the troubled spirit with reassuring words is an object worthy of worship to the unthinking mind. When an intellectualized theology fails to satisfy, there is always a turning to the mystical. So the Greek turned from Olympianism to the Eleusinian mysteries. In such times faith in the supernatural always supplies the need.

In the third place there must not be overlooked the sex appeal. Eighty-five per cent of Father Divine's followers are women. A high degree of marital instability is found in Harlem. Mayor La Guardia's commission found that of 1600 families interviewed, 700 had been broken up with at least one of the parents missing. "To these poor,

exploited, unromantic lives, frustrated, disappointed, unhappy, and unloved, Father Divine is the great father and lover, husband and friend." These women love him devotedly to the point of worship, and he fills the void in their lives vacated by some one else. During the meeting one woman testified she was thrown into the supreme joys of heaven just by being able to touch his body. Others were content to have him smile on them as they testified, or to come under his shadow.

A fourth explanation not so different but psychologically just as significant is the promotion of the confessional on the part of the adherents. Freudian psychology has given no more profound truth than to point out the value of catharsis, telling others, confessing to others. Such exercise releases tensions and brings peace and contentment of soul. The Oxford Group movement has learned the advantage of this, as has the Roman Catholic Church. To be able to share with someone in whom one has confidence, respect, and love, releases the troubles that fret the soul and gives a calm and new lease on life. Such values come to Father Divine's followers.

Will the twenty-two million followers claimed all over the world increase or will the movement die out when the people have been disillusioned?

Probably the delusion has not yet reached its zenith. The history of similar movements is simply this: the emotional substratum subsides and there is substituted for it an intellectualized theology which provides a basis for belief. On such a basis the movement may continue indefinitely.

The delusion is, in the last analysis, just one of many today which are given out as nostrums designed to cash in on the fagging spirits of a humanity which is losing its

faith, ideals, and vision. The delusion in the case of many of Father Divine's followers is just more pronounced than in the case of cousin deliriums such as those advocated by the late Huey Long, by Sinclair Lewis, Father Coughlin, and Dr. Townsend. They cry out against the decadent society in which we live, with all its injustices and pagan practices. In that service there is merit. The impending calamity of the whole situation is that it puts unlimited power into the hands of one who could be a potential demagogue and often is.

The way is not by the route of blind, delusionary hero worship. The influence of a strong personality will always be felt in readjustments of any era, but woe to the people who surrender their critical reflective faculties to any one man and become blind hero-worshippers. [1]

1. **January, 1936.**

APPENDIX D

LOURDES

I am writing this while still drinking in the atmosphere of Lourdes. For Lourdes is more than a city; it is the reflection of a religious motivation, a sort of religious rallying point comparable in some ways to a camp meeting. Here they were, thousands of people. They came by train and sight-seeing cars in the main. Their journey represents a pilgrimage akin to that made to Canterbury in Chaucer's day.

The streets of the city can best be described by comparing them to those of Niagara Falls. Hotels, sidewalk cafes, and souvenir shops sum it up. The streets are incredibly narrow, and the sidewalks narrower still. However, everyone walks in the streets, making way, of course, every few seconds, as in Egyptian cities, for the honk, honk, honk of large sight-seeing cars, of bicycles, and automobiles. It is a typical French city at the edge of the Pyrenees.

The gala color of the city dates back to March of 1858, when Bernadette, a teen-age girl, daughter of an unemployed, poverty-stricken Frenchman, believed she saw in a grotto just outside the city, while she was getting firewood one day, a lady dressed in white who asked her to return from time to time. No one else but Bernadette saw the lady who, Bernadette said, called herself The Lady of the Immaculate Conception. The lady told Bernadette water would come up on that spot one day and that she

should say that a church was to be built there. The episode bears strong resemblance to the vision Jeanne d'Arc had earlier.

The ecclesiastical authorities derided her story, but the populace was attracted by it, especially when they were forbidden to go out to see if a manifestation of some sort were there. The story goes that sure enough water did spring up a few weeks following, and that a man was cured who had been blind for many years. The reported healing of the daughter of the Empress Eugenie gave backing to the healing, and finally ecclesiastical if not political opposition was softened.

Today here is the most famous healing shrine of the Roman Catholic church. Crutches, trusses hang there as testimony to its healing powers. Every day now helpless people are wheeled to its waters. Some are brought there sitting upright in their wheeled carts; others are borne there on stretchers, some of whom are helplessly deformed invalids or who have some other major affliction which dictates their being carried. Still others walk to its waters in the grotto. Nurses and physicians are there. Four times a day the afflicted may be taken to the waters of the grotto.

Most spectacular is the procession held each day. It is a colorful affair. At least 2,000 participate, including hundreds of clergy, sisters, and numerous pilgrimage delegations. It takes an hour for the procession to pass in front of the church. Public address systems lead the order of marching and worship. Everyone in the audience of over 5,000 prays for the sick as well as for sinners. Even while the sick are carried into the grotto waters, a priest leads the kneeling masses in front of the grotto in worship and prayer for the sick.

Now how valid are the healings? Who can say? In 1953, scarcely any scientific man of reputation is willing to deny miracles. There are too many to be noted in life and in the physical world itself to gainsay them. The fact remains that there are three classes of sick persons to be distinguished. First are those sick to be sure, but with a definite pathology absent. Many such cases have had their etiology traced to a mental trauma, an emotional conflict. Most everyone has always been willing to grant that in these cases instantaneous cures are effected often.

In the second place, there are those with a definite pathology present, as in the case of cancer or tuberculosis. That cures do occur here occasionally by observable psycho-therapy cannot be gainsaid. A belief in miracles must allow for that too. For those who believe in an omnipotent God, the explanation is readily at hand.

In the third place are the physical defects, the eyeball gone, the arm gone, the tooth gone. Granted, evidences of replacements here in this field are rare indeed. There are several instances, however, where Christ worked on this kind of afflicted and, according to the record, effected physical miracles.

Now to what extent is God in this? To what extent is the cause psychological? Again who can say? [1]

1. **July, 1953.**

DATE DUE

MAR 2 3 '62			
APR 6 '62			
APR 2 3 '63			
JUL 31 '63			
MAY 2 0 '64			
MAR 2 3 '66			
APR 12 '66			
JAN 2 '74			
[illegible]			
MAR 2 0 '74			

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